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LOS ANGELES

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Chim Dha;

OR, THE BLACK DINGLE:

Windermere:

The Curse of Earth:

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THEMIS.

LONDON:

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AVIS.

As æronauts, before they mount on high,
With greater certainty that they may know
What currents in those upper regions blow,
A small balloon, their pilot, use to fly ;
So we, who would a bolder venture try,
Our pinions' doubtful strength that we may prove
In Fancy's loftier realms expert to move,
Nor unknown dangers carelessly defy,
Throw out these scattered leaves inquiringly ;
Content to watch, if haply they may rise
On favouring gales like those that breathe below ;
Or should perchance their luckless fate belie
The hope that prompted to the fond emprise,
Each more ambitious project to forego.

To one, who haply knows, or haply not,
For I was never one of those who seek,
What other signs may better tell, to speak,
The feelings of a heart that ne'er forgot,
Nor would permit that after scenes should blot
The record once inscribed in memory's book
Of kindly deed or word, or kindly look,
Howe'er blind fortune may dispose my lot :
To one, whose gentle nature well, I wot,
Deserves such homage as the muse may pay,
Nor by too strict a rule will estimate,
As critic searching out each faulty spot,
The merit of my unpretending lay ;
These fruits of lonely hours be dedicate.

CWM DHU ;
OR,
THE BLACK DINGLE.

CANTO I.

I.

Whoe'er through Tanat's vale has strayed,
Has marked, perchance, the sombre hue
Of Nature's garb in Cwm Dhu ;
Or tempted by its grateful shade,
Has sought at noon some darker glade
Within that deep and lonely dell,
Whereon the sun's bright beams ne'er fell,
Or straggling fitfully in mazes played.

2.

There erst the wolf her covert made,
That nightly on the mountains prowled,
And, gaunt with hunger, ravening howled,
Or e'er the moon her light displayed ;
While shepherds, for their flocks afraid,
More heedful watch around them kept,
Nor, careless of the danger, slept,
Their fleecy charge to murderous fangs betrayed.

3.

Long has the wolf her covert fled,
Or by the sheep dogs brought to bay,
Been forced for all her thefts to pay
Due forfeit with her grisly head.
Yet has not cultivation sped
Within that dingle black and drear,
Though man has made his dwelling there,
By charm of deep seclusion haply led.

4.

Or while his flocks perchance he fed
Within the neighbouring valley's bound,
A sheltered ingle there he found,
Wherein to build a lowly shed,
That for each simple want bestead ;
Where now a ruined mansion rears
It's gloomy front decayed by years,
It's owners mingled with the nameless dead.

5.

There lived, nor yet remote the day,
The yeoman JONES ; his honest name,
Though dear to Wales, unknown to fame.
Nor suited to the poet's lay :
Yet would the Muse her tribute pay
To sterling worth wherever found,
Nor leave a gentle spirit bound,
To dumb forgetfulness permitted prey.

6

A widowed man he was, and gray ;
And wearily had passed the time,
Since he had lost, in manhood's prime,
His mate, in childbirth snatched away ;
Whenceforth did never brightening ray
Of joy his countenance illumine,
Nor did he e'er his place resume
Among his equals innocently gay.

7.

But with his daughter would he stray,
The gentle child in mercy given,
When she who bare her passed to heaven,
And through the meadows wend his way,
Soon as the balmy breath of May
Had decked the fragrant vale with flowers,
And spending there the fleeting hours,
Would calmly watch her quiet artless play.

8.

Then would he take her tiny hand,
'Ere yet the shades of evening fell,
And with her seek their native dell :
Where, should no graver cares demand
His tendance, would he pensive stand,
And while she took her simple meal,
Adown his cheek big tears would steal,
As, viewed in her, her mother's charms expand.

9.

And when he heard her nightly pay
Her orisons to Him above,
To keep her in His care and love ;
With heart responsive would he pray,
That she might prove his age's stay ;
And, as the ivy verdure flings
Around the ruin where it clings,
Might grace and cheer the evening of his day.

10.

Nor prayed in vain : for he was spared
To see her ripening beauty's bloom ;
Which though his spirit's settled gloom
It might not chace, yet sorrow shared
With one who ever gently cared
Each wish to meet, and soothe each grief,—
How could it fail to find relief ?

Thus in the vale of years the old man fared.

11.

And she, though cheerless was her lot,
Thus in her youthful prime immured,
Yet was her destiny endured
With meekness that complained not.
'Twould seem the maiden ne'er forgot
The child's dependance on her sire ;
Nor might the calls of duty tire,
Nor from her memory's page his kindness blot.

12.

Yet had she all that winning grace
Of form and feature, none e'er saw,
But would reluctantly withdraw
Their tranced gaze : nor might the trace,
If seen but for the briefest space,
Her rare and pensive beauty left,
Though of each dazzling charm bereft.
The sight of other loveliness efface.

13.

If, reader, thou hast ever seen
The lily in it's native vale,
How fair, how delicately pale
Within it's leaf of darkest green,
Droop it's sweet bells of ivory sheen :
So pale, so exquisitely fair,
O'ershaded by her raven hair,
Was ALICE JONES, and such her modest mien.

14.

But where sequestered is the nook,
If but a fragrant flower be there,
To shed it's perfume on the air,
By mountain side, or winding brook,
In which the honey bee ne'er took
Her flight, by happy instinct taught,
Where native sweets are likeliest sought,
Or failed into each opening bud to look ?

15.

And where secluded is the spot,
To solitary musing dear,
If only beauty harbour there,
Be it in palace or in cot,
Where wayward Love intrudeth not ?
Nay more, where he is not confess'd
A welcome and a favoured guest,
His falsehood all too easily forgot ?

16.

So not unseen, nor unadmired,
The modest flower of Cwm Dhu ;
And wealthy suitors sought to woo,
By Love's resistless passion fired,
Fair Alice of the dell retired.
But one of all that rival band
Alone was worthy of her hand,
The gentle mate her timid heart desired.

17.

Yet was he brave and manly too,
Of open hand, and heart sincere,
As free from guile, as void of fear,
And ever to his promise true.
Such PIERCIE EVANS all who knew
Would frankly own ; and now 'twas told,
On warrant of that mourner old,
That he should wear the flower of Cwm Dhu.

18.

Yet would she not her sire forsake,
Whose growing age but ill could spare
The solace of her daily care ;
No, not for Love and Piercie's sake ;
Nor though her weary heart should ache
With hope deferred and bliss delayed :—
Till duty's claims were fully paid,
Nought selfish might her resolution shake.

19.

Her father, sometimes thought the maid,
Might welcome proposition make,
That Piercie should their home partake,
And to their succour bring his aid.
If not, yet was she nothing swayed :
However much of life were past,
Still might it's cheerful taper last,
While wedded bliss her piety repaid.

CANTO II

I

So rules the mood our fickle race,
As various is their estimate
Of passing time's unchanging rate,
As runs the course their fortunes trace ;
To those engaged in pleasure's chace,
How swiftly fly the winged hours !
While they on whom misfortune lowers
Upbraids as tedious time's still rapid pace.

2.

Whiles did the gentle Alice feel,
As though the hours were longer grown,
Since her first years of life had flown ;
And o'er her constant heart would steal
A languor she would fain conceal ;
A weariness of time's delay,
Which though she strove to chase away,
Her sadder looks would partially reveal.

3.

Yet was it still a welcome care
To aid and cheer her aged sire ;
Whose failing health would now require
Of duteous service larger share :
Nor gentle tendance did she spare ;
Nor aught that might his spirit soothe,
Or make life's closing stage more smooth,
And pain and helplessness less hard to bear.

4.

But when has filial duty stayed
The arm of death, or turned aside
Th' unerring dart, which ne'er belied
It's aim, nor from it's victim strayed?
And now upon that bed is laid,
From which he never more shall rise,
The yeoman, and in such a guise,
Not long may his departure be delayed.

5.

In feeble accents has he prayed
His daughter, that she quickly write,
A distant kinsman to invite
To lend his prompt and friendly aid:
For he it was, the old man said,
Who should the maiden's guardian be,
Her interests protect, and see
Each last sad rite to his remembrance paid.

6.

Within her sank the maiden's heart,
As if those accents, weak and bland,
Had borne her parent's stern command,
From each fond hope of life to part.
Across her mind there seemed to dart
A dark presentiment of ill,
Should she the charge assigned fulfil,
Which coward shame forbad her to impart.

7.

"No guardian's care," she yet replied.
"Do I desire, and nothing fear;
If only you, my father dear,
In Piercie will your trust confide."
She more had said, but blushes dyed
Of crimson hue her pallid cheek,
Which vainly did the maiden seek
Beneath her kerchief's friendly veil to hide.

8.

“ Young Piercie has my best regard,”
The old man said, “ and rests with you
The charge that from the guerdon due
To constancy he be not-barred.
Till then your maiden fame to guard
From slander’s tongue, and shun the cares,
Which still attend on grave affairs,
Think not amiss to live my kinsman’s ward.

9

The gentle girl made no reply,
But straight betook her to the task,
Their kinsman’s instant aid to ask,
Howe’er ’twas done reluctantly.
Nor might she give a reason why,
Yet as she penned that summons brief,
Her boding mind portended grief,
And heaved her sinking heart the deep-drawn sigh.

10.

Full promptly was the call obeyed ;
And HUMPHREYS, such their kinsman's name,
On reeking steed and jaded came ;
Nor on the road, he said, had stayed.
'T had been ungracious to upbraid
His boastful shew of friendly zeal,
Yet did the doubting Alice feel,
Such haste some selfish interest betrayed.

11.

Nor did his mien repulsive tend
More kindly sentiments to win ;
If but the mood, that reigns within,
It's semblance to the features lend.
His temper all untaught to bend,
No contradiction would he brook ;
While bold and resolute his look,
He seemed not one 'twere prudent to offend.

12.

To Alice and her suffering sire
A friendly bluntness he assumed ; —
And on his kindred much presumed
Their worldly substance to inquire :
“ Whate’er his kinsman should desire,
That might the interest regard
Or welfare of his future ward,
His ready aid he freely might require.”

13.

To lean upon the strong and bold
Is still the part of weaker minds ;
Whose indecision gladly finds
Whereon to fix its timorous hold.
And thus the yeoman, meek and old,
Infirm of purpose, as of frame,
A passive instrument became,
By his officious kinman’s art controlled.

14.

Without reserve he frankly made
Disclosure of his worldly state ;
Nor would that, till it were too late,
It's due disposal be delayed.
His kinsman therefore has he prayed,
The welcome charge to undertake,
In trust for his dear daughter's sake,
And straightway seek the scrivener's lettered aid.

15.

And now each needful form observed,
He mention made of Piercie's suit,
Nor would her guardian should dispute
The maiden's choice so well deserved :
This only point had he reserved,
Nor trusted to his kinsman's will,
Who vowed his wishes to fulfil,
Should not his ward from her own choice have swerved.

16.

Yet did he not the wish disguise,
That she a wealthier mate had found ;
And, ere by holy contract bound,
The maid to forethought would advise :
Nor seemed he worthily to prize
The pang that tore her faithful heart,
Nor cared to note her bosom's smart,
Maintaining still a blunt and friendly guise.

17.

To Piercie was his manner cold,
As though he studied to repress
Each proffered mark of friendliness,
Nor liked his bearing free and bold.
But why such distance he should hold
Towards one for whom his destined ward
Felt such affectionate regard,
The hidden motive did he not unfold.

18.

Still strove the maid to quell her fears,
Nor harboured the unwelcome thought,
That Humphreys would their union thwart,
Howe'er he broached his heartless jeers.
Yet did she nightly bathe with tears
Her sleepless couch, as sorrow drew
It's gloomy veil athwart the view
Young Hope had pictured of their future years.

19.

His worldly dispositions made,
No more the yeoman's thoughts were given
To earthly cares, but fixed on heaven ;
And much he mused, and much he prayed,
Nor seemed of Death's approach afraid,
Oft talking of that blissful state,
Where he again should join his mate ;
Nor hoped the summons would be long delayed.

20.

Yet deeply did he feel the smart,
Nor less that she her grief suppressed
Lest he the more should be distressed,
From his beloved child to part.
So closely twined around his heart
Her fondly cherished image, never
Might earthly power that union sever,
Nor ought dissolve, save death's keen icy dart.

21.

The mortal struggle came at last ;
And in the iron clutch of death
Awhile the yeoman gasped for breath,
Then sank :—the awful scene had passed.
Not so the gloom death's shadow cast :
For when has he his office sped,
On sanguine field or peaceful bed,
Nor left the speechless bystanders aghast !

CANTO III.

1.

So strongly knit those sacred ties,
That bind the parent to the child,
By no device may be beguiled
The pang their severance testifies.
To watch a mother's glazing eyes
Our tenderest sympathy calls forth ;
A deeper feeling marks the worth
Of him we mourn for when a father dies.

2.

No mother's love, nor mother's care,
The gentle Alice e'er had known ;
Still seeking to her sire alone,
Each grief to soothe, each joy to share :
The harder was it now to bear
That sense of utter loneliness,
Which while she struggled to repress,
Bespoke a loss nought earthly might repair.

3.

One fondly cherished hope remained
To cheer her spirit's deep distress ;
Yet would her heart the fear confess,
It's object ne'er might be attained :
For though her guardian now refrained,
Nor mention made of Piercie's name,
Yet was his bearing still the same,
And decency alone his tongue enchained.

4.

Once paid the solemn obsequies
Befitting to the yeoman's state,
No longer did he hesitate
To lay aside his friendly guise :
Nor left it long to vague surmise
How he a guardian's power would use ;
More likely seeming to abuse,
Than for the maiden's weal to exercise.

5.

To Piercie he at once denied
All further access to his ward ;
Nor might it with his will accord,
That she so meanly be allied.
“ Howe'er the angry maid might chide,
It moved not him : until the hour,
He ceased to hold a guardian's power,
She never should become young Piercie's bride.”

6.

The more his purpose to ensure,
And furtive flight to circumvent,
If such should be their bold intent,
Did he the maiden close immure :
“ Not long,” he said, “ would love endure,
Debarred of that on which it fed ;
Or if awhile it lingered,
Continued absence was it's certain cure.”

7.

His doors, by close suspicion barred,
Ne'er opened to the bidden guest :
While on the wanderer seeking rest
They still inhospitably jarred :
Nor cared he what construction hard
His tyrannous behaviour bore ;
While prating fools could nothing more,
Their praise or censure did he not regard.

8.

In vain the injured maiden sought
Her griefs to pour in Piercie's ear ;
Nor might she, though he harboured near,
To well-known rendezvous resort :
So prompt her guardian was to thwart
Each artless scheme, and quick to scan
The purpose of each simple plan,
By no contrivance could her aim be wrought.

9.

Much will the gentle spirit bear
From fortune's frown, or tyrant's power,
If, like the sunbeam in the shower,
Hope gilds the darkling cloud of care.
The heart believes in visions fair,
Upon the ravished sense to dawn,
Soon as the sable veil's withdrawn,
Nor, while a gleam remains, will it despair.

10.

But hope no longer cheered the gloom,
That brooded o'er the maiden's heart :
Nor balm of kindness soothed the smart
Of griefs that stole her youthful bloom :
And seemed a spectral form to loom,
Mid gathering storms and shadows rife,
Across the dreary waste of life,
Ill omened herald of approaching doom.

11.

Nor was the shadowy omen vain,
Nor long forbore the threatened ill
Its doubtful augury to fulfil,
Or make its hidden meaning plain.
Regardless of her bosom's pain,
Has Humphreys bid the maid prepare
His homeward journey straight to share,
Nor may she in her native dell remain.

12.

By fear and grief well nigh distraught.
With hurried step the maiden paced
The small parterre, now all defaced,
Where once her gentle hands had wrought :
And still her eager glances sought,
If haply yet some passing friend
Might unexpected succour lend.
Or Piercie to her present aid be brought.

13.

Just then a youth, whom nature's lore
Had tempted from his distant home
'Mong Cambria's mountain chains to roam.
Passed by, the Berwyns to explore.
His practised hand a hammer bore,
Whose skilfully directed shock
Might cleave in twain the stubborn rock,
Or disentomb the thickly crusted ore.

14.

With faltering tongue, and crimsoned cheek,
As if reluctant to express
To one unknown her heart's distress,
Did she the wandering youth bespeak :
“ Hard fate constrains me thus to seek
Your timely aid ; for much I fear
Irreparable mischief near,
Unless in friendly ears my grief I speak.”

15.

But Humphreys marked the maid's address,
And, instant issuing from the house,
A bloodhound, gaunt and ravenous.
Slipped at the youth from near recess.
’Twere vain his onset to repress,
And with a prompt and well aimed blow.
The stranger laid the monster low,
Ferocious even in his helplessness.

16.

No word escaped his sullen lord ;
But as the brute his death-note howled.
He darkly on the stranger scowled,
And sternly motioned back his ward :
The maid complied with meek accord :
Yet rested on her features fair,
The deepening gloom of mute despair.
By harsh rebuke her timid spirit awed.

17.

All bootless seemed more lengthened stay :
And wondering what the painful scene
He now had looked upon might mean.
The youth pursued his lonely way.
Yet mused not long ; for, sooth to say.
As he the lines of Godor traced,
Their varied features clean effaced
The fading record of his early day.

18.

Unheeded passed the noontide hours,
And unobserved the day's decline ;
Nor marked he yet each warning sign
That presage gave of coming showers.
And now the closing welkin lowers
With darkling clouds that hide the sun,
'Ere yet his race be fully run,
While birds belated seek their leafy bowers.

19.

Nor might the stranger further stray ;
For many a mile of trackless waste
With doubtful step must be retraced,
And gathering storms forbade delay.
Nor friendly covert courts his stay ;
Though, as the blast the desert scours,
Or bursting cloud it's torrent pours,
Fain would he shelter on his cheerless way.

20.

Salutes at length his listening ear
The booming fall of Rhaiadr ;
Just where an ancient grove of fir
It's moss-grown trunks is seen to rear ;
Beneath, in gloomiest shadow drear,
Rushes the torrent black and deep,
Then tumbles thundering down the steep,
A dizzy height of fifty fathoms clear.

21.

Brief shelter there the stranger sought,
Ere yet he crossed the fragile plank,
That resting on each rocky bank,
Rude passage gave with danger fraught.
Perchance he erred, yet still he thought,
Above the thunder of the fall,
And howling of the fitful squall,
His ear the sound of human voices caught.

22.

Advancing to the river's side,
The form of Humphreys met his view ;
Whom one, it seemed not that he knew,
Was heard in angry tones to chide :
“ No longer think your plans to hide ;
The maid is nowhere to be found ;
Nor may you pass the river's bound
Unless to me your purpose you confide.”

23.

“ You claim, forsooth, my plans to know,”
He scoffing said; “ And think to spoil
The aim of all my care and toil,
And dog my steps, where'er I go.
Then take”——a fell and sudden blow
From ready weapon in his grasp,
Has made his victim reel and gasp ;
A second plunged him in the flood below.

24.

The waters clutched their helpless prey,
And chafing in its rocky bed,
As though it all too slowly sped,
The stream has hurried him away :
Nor earthly aid his fate may stay ;
A moment round the eddy whirled,
Then down the roaring cataract hurled ;—
No secrets with the dark abyss betray.

25.

“ That villain’s deed was not unseen ;”
The stranger cried : and from the shade
With sudden spring his passage made
Across the favouring plank between :
Nor had it unavenged been ;
But mounting straight a trusty steed,
At hand retained to serve his need,
The murderer sought in flight his guilt to screen.

26.

The youth pursued at rapid pace ;
And traversing a rising ground
The horseman needs must compass round,
Awhile maintained the unequal chace.
And now appears a rugged space,
Round which the road is seen to wind ;
Where could he but a pathway find.
The fleeing felon he might haply face.

27.

But ere he made the steep descent,
The murderer's shout assailed his ear :
Which answered by a voice more near,
Betrayed confederate intent.
And now his eye attentive bent,
Beneath a beetling crag concealed,
The twilight dim a car revealed,
In which it seemed a female figure leant.

28.

At signal brief by Humphreys given,
Whose guilty fears brooked no delay,
The car pursued it's onward way,
To utmost speed of courser driven :
All vainly had the stranger striven
To follow on their rapid flight ;
The shades of evening closed in night,
And darkest clouds o'erspread the vault of heaven.

29.

Still round each jutting point and nook,
Urged by the lash and frequent goad,
Held on the steeds that fearful road,
From which 'tis dizziness to look :
Nor till their hurried tramp forsook
His listening ear, the stranger turned,
While generous ire his bosom burned,
And straight the pathway to Llangynnog took.

CONCLUSION.

I.

Rises serene th' unclouded sun.
And, earthward turned his searching rays,
Each guilty proof of crime surveys,
By ruffian man in darkness done.
And now his softened beams have won,
Piercing that gloomy grove of fir,
The depths of Pistyl Rhaiadr
Nor may the murderer's deed discovery shun.

2.

Responsive to the stranger's call,
An eager band had promptly sought,
Ere daylight yet it's succour brought,
The troubled cauldron of the fall.
And there, the common grief of all,
Defaced by many a ghastly wound,
Was Piercie's mangled body found,
A sight the stoutest heart might well appal.

3.

In vain upon the murderer's flight
The messengers of vengeance sped :
To him, by whom man's blood is shed,
Welcome the deepest gloom of night :
Nor waited he the morning's light ;
But chiding e'en the brief delay
Attendant on each far relay,
Forbade the sickening maiden to alight.

4.

Nor might she rest or succour find,
Till, reached at length the Mersey's shore,
Her sinking frame no longer bore
The anguish of her tortured mind.
To mercenary hands consigned,
And to the vain physician's aid,
Death called away the hapless maid,
Nor may we deem his summons less than kind.

5.

Yet no familiar form was near,
On which her last long look might rest ;
No trusty hand, that gently prest,
Returned her pledge of love sincere :
Nor well-known voice essayed to cheer
The gloom of that departing hour,
When the last enemy has power
To strike the quailing heart with mortal fear.

6.

But guardian angels hovered o'er
That lonely couch, as passed away
From it's fair tenement of clay
Her spirit meek, aloft to soar ;
And on triumphant pinions bore
To brighter mansions in the sky,
Where pain and sorrow come not nigh,
Nor earthly troubles shall assail her more.

7.

No fondly sorrowing friends were there,
When strangers unconcernedly gave
Her body to its early grave,
To weep around the maiden's bier :
No pious relatives to rear
Memorial of the hapless fate
Of one so young and desolate,
To claim the tribute of a passing tear.

8.

But in Llangynnog's sacred pale,
The simple monument that shows
The place of Piercie's long repose,
Tells of her death the piteous tale ;
And there the peasants of the vale,
As gathering round, they weekly read,
The record of each ruthless dead,
With no feigned grief the lovers' fate bewail.

9.

The murderer sought that western strand,
Where crime unpunished stalks abroad,
Nor fears the gyves, nor felon's cord,
Secure to meet a kindred band ;
Nor needs to hide the bloody hand,
But still a grasp responsive finds,
From those nor law nor honour binds,
To licence grown the freedom of the land.

NOTE.

The foregoing tale is founded on facts communicated in the following letter to a near relative, by the sole witness of them, who has kindly permitted the insertion of his interesting and graphical narrative in this place :

LLANFYLLIN, 17th July, 1847.

MY DEAR —, The little town of Llanrhaidr yn Mochnant is situated in a district visited by very few of the tourists who annually pour into North Wales; and yet, beside the attraction of Pistyl Rhaiadr, a magnificent waterfall at no great distance, the neighbouring Valley of the Tanat exhibits many a picturesque scene, and its green meadows contrast well with the majestic range of the Berwyns towering over the hills on the north.

I had been but a short time wandering over this rugged country, when I was struck with the desolate appearance of a house situated at a place called Cwm Dhu, or “The Black Dingle,” one of the many branches from the valley through which “the stream of the cataract” pours its waters. All cultivation had ceased around it, and though the upper windows gave signs of its being still inhabited, those of the ground floor were barricadoed as if for a siege, and the door always remained closed.

I was told in the town that the house was tenanted by a man named Humphreys, whose history was unknown to every one. He had suddenly arrived there during the last illness of old Mr. Jones, who, with his daughter, used to live there in a very retired manner, but had been received

by him as an old acquaintance, and was left in charge of the property, said to be chiefly in money, as guardian to the young lady. He was a man, they said, of morose and unsociable habits, who gave no one a kind word, nor seemed to expect it from others; he kept Miss Jones a prisoner to the house, and young Pierce Evans, who, in her father's life-time, was looked upon as a favoured suitor, could now scarcely ever obtain access to the object of his affections.

These histories, of course, invested the house with more interest; and as I passed two or three times that way, in order to investigate some of the higher parts of the Berwyn mountain, I longed to catch a glimpse of some of the mysterious inmates. At length my curiosity was gratified, and I was fated to be eye-witness to a scene, of which I shall never think without a shudder.

It was a lowering morning, and dark clouds enveloped the peaks of Cader Berwyn and Moel yr Ewig, as I passed the dingle of Cwm Dhu to ascend the heights of Godor: suddenly I observed, that in the neglected garden, and at that corner of it near which lay my path, a young lady dressed in mourning was walking in a hurried manner to and fro. Her face was deadly pale; and besides the charms of her fine features, and her locks of raven hair, unconfined by any head covering, there was an excitement in her eye, which rivetted my attention. As I approached, she looked up once or twice, blushed deeply for a moment, and said: "Excuse me, I pray, for thus addressing a total stranger, but I am placed in a most peculiar and dangerous position, and unless I can to-day give notice to some of my few friends, I have reason to fear—" She was interrupted by the yelling of a savage dog, which rushed from the house, followed by a man of about fifty years of age, of stern and bronzed appearance, whom I at once recognized as Humphreys. The dog flew fiercely at me; and as his master made no effort to restrain him, I raised my long-handled hammer,

and with a blow, which fortunately took effect on the middle of the head, laid the animal dead at my feet. Humphreys said not a word, but scowled blackly upon me, and motioned the young lady towards the house; and I could see that though she obeyed quietly, there was an expression of despair in her countenance, for which I could not account.

The door closed with a jar upon this singular couple, and I pursued my way up the mountains, musing upon what I had witnessed. After a while, however, I became so much interested in the geological features which I was tracing out, that I thought no more upon Cwm Idu, and the evening began to close in whilst I had several miles yet to walk across the hills, before I could reach my temporary home, Llangynnog.

The storm, which was so long threatening, had now commenced; in fitful gusts the wind dashed across those wild wastes, and ever and anon heavy showers poured down, obscuring the view of everything around. I had to cross from Trumfelen by the head of Pistyl Rhaiadr; and took refuge for a few minutes in the wood of pines which fringes the black rocks over which the water is dashed in one leap some hundreds of feet to the valley below. I was near enough to hear the thunder of the fall, though it was almost overpowered by the roar of the wind, as it swept among the branches of the old fir trees, which partially sheltered me. Yet, amidst the confusion of sounds, I thought I could distinguish human voices; and as I approached nearer to the plank by which I was to cross the stream, I could hear them more distinctly, and observed that they were raised, as if in violent altercation. As I emerged from the wood, I saw two persons standing by the side of the stream, where it bubbles and chafes in its rocky bed, previous to dashing down over the frightful precipice. One of them was Humphreys; the other was a far younger man, who with much gesticulation was saying, "I tell

you, I *will* know ! she has disappeared, I don't know whither ; and I have followed you so far, and insist on your telling me what you are about." " Oh ! you insist, do you ? " replied Humphreys scornfully, " and you would spoil my plans for me : then down with you." As he spoke, he struck his opponent a fearful blow with a heavy-handled whip, and as the young man staggered back, pushed him violently into the stream. The troubled waters swept him away, and in half a dozen yards hurled him over the ledge into the abyss below.

I was breathless :—no sound arose, but the sullen booming of the cataract : my blood froze within me ; but it was only for a moment, and crying, " Ha, villain ! that deed was not unseen," I dashed towards Humphreys. Before, however, I could cross the plank, he, alarmed at my appearance, had hastily mounted a horse, which he had at hand, and instantly started at a rapid pace across the moors in the direction opposite to that of his own house.

Excited to a high pitch by what I had seen, I pursued him without delay, and though the shades of night were falling, and the rain streamed down thickly, I saw that if I could avoid the circuitous route which his horse was obliged to take, I could probably intercept him. But I knew not what point he would make for, and he was evidently well acquainted with this portion of the hills ; for notwithstanding all my exertions, he so increased his distance, that I could barely keep him in sight. At length I saw that by making a steep descent we should reach the road to Bala ; and whilst I hesitated, considering which way he was likely to take, I heard him shout ; and observing that it was answered, directed my course to that part of the road where I heard the voice. But he was too quick for me : I had just time to see, that under the protection of a bank of earth, a gig was waiting, in which a female was seated by the side of the driver ; when urging his horse to a gallop, Humphreys called to them to drive on, and they tore upwards in the

direction of Bala at a speed which rendered it useless for me to attempt to follow them. On, on, round nook and promontory of that terrific road, which seems to overhang, without parapet or fence, the deep valley beneath, they rattled furiously as long as I could keep them in sight; and when the darkness at length veiled them from me, I made the best of my way to Llangynnog.

The next morning the body of Piercie Evans was found beneath the waterfall, dreadfully mutilated: and at the inquest, which has since been held, my evidence, joined to what was previously known, was sufficiently conclusive to the Jury, who returned a verdict of "Wilful Murder" against Humphreys; and constables were at once despatched after him. By searching his house, and examining a servant, who on that day had been sent out of the way, it was found that he had for some time packed up his valuables, as if preparing for a long journey, and had left nothing but some old furniture behind. Young Evans had of late so closely watched him, that it appears he sent off the gig in one direction, intending himself to take another to meet it on the road.

The constables followed him as far as Liverpool, and report, that he posted uninterruptedly from Bala to that town; Miss Jones, who had been very ill at starting, growing rapidly so much worse, as to attract the attention of the people along the road. On arriving at Liverpool, a physician had been called in, but it was too late, and the poor girl expired that night.

The next day, after leaving money and directions for her burial, and pleading urgent business as a reason for leaving at such a juncture, he sailed in the packet for New York.

You may imagine, that since this time, I have not been able to look without horror on the Pistyl Rhaiadr, and shall not be sorry soon to leave the valley of the Tanat.

Your affectionate brother,

W. W. S.

WINDERMERE.

WINDERMERE.

Oh Windermere ! thou witching name !
Whose matchless beauties ever dwell
On memory's canvass still the same
As when my raptured vision fell
On thee at first in tranced gaze,
And life's sole pleasure seemed to be,
Throughout those earlier, happier days,
To look, and still to look on thee.
Methinks I see, from distant fell,
Thy tranquil bosom's broad expanse,
With not a rippling wave to tell
Of aught that may dispel thy trance ;
But all thy sun-lit beauties sleep,

As if by noontide heat oppressed,
While giant mountains round thee keep
A voiceless watch, in verdure dressed ;
Their sombre shadows threatening doom
To all who would thy realms infest,
Or penetrate the solemn gloom,
Thy placid slumbers to molest. [20

Thy lovely isles meanwhile are seen
A brighter verdure to unfold,
Reposing on the watery sheen,
Like emeralds set in burnished gold :
The graceful trees, that fringe them round,
Stooping to kiss thy bosom fair,
Or peer into the still profound,
To view their own sweet image there :
And, mirrored in the glassy lake,
Each upland fell and mountain blue,
Each swelling copse and straggling brake
Displays it's form and various hue.
'Twould seem as if no angry frown
Could e'er deform a face so fair,

Nor passion's ruffling wind be thrown
O'er bosom so devoid of care.

Thus calm thy treacherous repose,
When hapless MURRAY launched his barque,
Nor heard dissuading age unfold
The hidden sense of omen dark [40
His noble grandsire's widowed mate
In troublous dream that night had seen,
Her orphan struggling with his fate,
A watery death 'neath wave serene.
Unheeded all her boding fears,
His barque has glided from the shore,
Her voice no longer reached his ears,
Her accents greeted him no more.
His glad companions cheered him on,
And bent them to the dipping oars,
Reposing ever and anon,
To mark the fast receding shores :
Their idly flapping sail, the while,
Courtied in vain the slumbering breeze,
No ripple wooed the sunny isle,

No whispered sigh the listening trees.
Still bending to the easy toil,
The rowers plied their welcome task,
Or, running out the anchor's coil,
Their viands spread, and drained the flask. [60
And thus, with spirits blithe and free,
Did they the joyous hours prolong ;
The banks of Brathay heard their glee,
And Lowwood echoed to their song.

At length the sun was seen to rest
A broader disk of ruddy hue
Upon the silver-fringed crest
Of Cumbria's mountains bathed in blue :
And now the loiterers trimmed their sail,
And plied the time-observing oar,
Anxious, ere yet the light should fail,
To reach again the welcome shore.
But Troutbeck, through his peaceful vale,
Had heard the squall's ill-omened moan,
And sylvan trophies of the gale
In Calgarth's rocky bed are strewn :

And swept across the placid lake
A lengthening chain of snowy surge,
That seemed its waters to awake
At once to their remotest verge. [80
While fitful gusts, in angry tone,
Proclaimed the presence of the storm,
Which now, to frantic fury grown,
Defaced each late so beauteous form.

In haste the boatmen furled the sail,
And plied the oars with steady stroke,
And laid the barque before the gale,
To shun the waves that o'er them broke.
The sky meanwhile was overcast
With pitchy gloom, forestalling night,
And ere the Island's head they passed,
Failed the last glimpse of fading light.
Ne'er seemed so welcome to their eyes
The cheerful hearth's enlivening blaze.
As then o'er Bowness bay to rise
The glimmering taper's puny rays.
And now, by desperate strength secured,

Her moorings held the tossing barque,
While they, with hardihood assured,
Sprang for the shallop's outline dark. [100
"But where is Murray?" rose the cry;
"He's to the bottom gone," replied
A voice like raven's in the sky,
Scenting the prey not yet has died.
And lights are flitting o'er the waves,
Whose turmoil mocks the hopeless quest,
Though many a boat the tempest braves,
From death's fell jaws his prey to wrest.
But all in vain :—and one by one,
The boatmen seek the crowded shore,
Sad omen to that widow lone,
She ne'er may see her orphan more.

Resplendent in the morning's light,
All beauteous smiled that peaceful bay ;
And 'neath its waters, still and bright,
The hapless youth's fair body lay.
Unmoved it yielded up its dead,
Unconscious of the widow's grief,

Who to the sentence bowed her head,
And in submission sought relief. 120
And still it smiled from day to day,
Nor owned the universal gloom,
That brooded o'er the grave and gay,
When they consigned him to his tomb.
I hear again the solemn knell,
I see the long procession move,
I feel again the thrilling spell,
That binds me to a world above ;
Again the awful truth I learn,
That earth to earth, and dust to dust,
And ashes to ashes, shall return,
And hail the hope, that for the just,
Restored again to life and joy,
Remains an endless, heavenly rest,
No storms may vex, no cares alloy,
In the bright mansions of the blest.

Scantly a third of life had passed,
When, Windermere, thy shores I left ;
Where still I would my lot were cast,

Of fate so favoured self bereft. [140
Another third of life is spent
'Mid scenes, though fair, yet not like thine ;
And still does memory present
Pictures, in which thy beauties shine
With all the vividness and truth
They rose upon my raptured view,
When, in the prime of ripened youth,
Thy sweet enchantment first I knew.
Nor shall oblivion, heartless cheat,
His jealous shadow o'er the cast,
Till life's warm pulses cease to beat,
Or long as memory's power shall last.

Nor may the muse forbear to pay,
To names in friendship's shrine embalmed,
The heartfelt tribute of a lay
Ne'er yet on pride by flattery palmed.
But no!—the welcome task renews
The wounds that time had seemed to heal ;
Nor may the constant heart refuse
Their renovated smart to feel. [160

For Storrs bewails her Bolton dead,
Consigning to his relict's care
The charge of those his bounty fed :
And Curwen, though his isle yet bear
That cherished name, himself is fled ;
And Calgarth mourns that widowed dame,
Whose hospitable rule has shed
Fresh honour on her Watson's name :
And Wilson, to the muses dear,
Quits not his academic chair,
Nor shares with Elleray the year ;
And Starkey shuns his bay so fair,
And Greaves is lost to Ferney Green,
And stranger names, and faces new,
Unheard before, till now unseen,
Startle the ear, and baulk the view.

Though forms unwonted range thy shores,
And voices strange thine echoes wake,
And steam supplant the dipping oars,
And monster trains thy mountains shake, [180
Yet art thou, Windermere, the same,

Nor time, nor chance, has power to change
Thine aspect fair, nor mar thy fame,
Unmatched through earth's remotest range.

THE CURSE OF EARTH.

THE CURSE OF EARTH.

“The Curse, tho’ lightened, still lies heavy on her.”

When with delighted senses we survey
The earth reposing in the light of day,
The flowery meads in softest verdure drest,
The peaceful herds enjoying tranquil rest,
Or rising from their undisturbed repose,
To crop the juicy herbage as it grows ;
When we behold the clear meandering streams
Reflecting back the sun’s meridian beams,
And imaging in still more lovely guise
The graceful trees that from their margins rise ;

The gently flowing waters circling round
Some sunny isle with brighter verdure crowned ;
While stragglers from the herd, in listless mood,
Wade through the channel, seeking daintier food,
Or drink the waters of the cooling flood :
When we again survey the rising hills,
Varied and fertilized by sparkling rills,
That thread their silvery course adown the steep,
Till, all their murmurs hushed, they silent sleep
In the calm depths of some secluded lake, [20
Hemmed in by woody copse, or tangled brake ;
While harmless sheep are feeding all around,
And lambs disporting frisk with nimble bound ;
The faithful sheep-dog keeping watch the while,
No guerdon seeking save the shepherd's smile :
Or when we saunter down some shady lane,
The cool refreshment of it's gloom to gain ;
Inhaling as we pass the mingled sweets,
That scent the air in nature's far retreats ;
Where the wild rose and hawthorn intertwine,
And violets nestle 'neath the climbing bine ;
While the gay songsters of the fields and groves

Confess, in tones melodious, their loves ;
Or, when, again, in autumn we behold
The corn fields wave their vegetable gold,
The orchards juicy treasures tempting shine,
The purple grapes hang clustering on the vine ;
The willing kine present their milky store,
And nature's lap with plenty all run o'er :
Can we a scene of so much beauty scan, [40
And yet believe the earth is under ban
And curse of God, through fault of rebel man ?—

Or when, again, man's self we contemplate,
His noble nature, and his high estate ;
Wielding his Maker's delegated power,
Than brightest angels but a little lower ;
When we regard his mind's unbounded reach,
His wondrous gifts of reason and of speech ;
His memory retentive of the past,
His foresight o'er the distant future cast,
His soul through endless ages still to last :
The outward frame, in which he is arrayed,
So fearfully and wonderfully made ;

The calm and thoughtful brow, the piercing eye,
The mouth, in which such varied meanings lie ;
His noble bearing, and majestic gait,
The strength and dignity, that on him wait :—
Or when his lovely partner we behold
By every movement some new grace unfold ;
Each look bespeaking tenderness and love, [60
Each word the meekness of the faithful dove ;
Her voice all tune, all elegance her form,
Her face the mirror of each modest charm ;
And when their beauteous offspring too we see,
Like fabled elves disporting on the lea,
All innocence, and thoughtlessness, and glee ;—
Can we believe them of a race accurst ?
Spoiled of the glorious state they held at first ?
Their Maker's imprest image all defaced ?
Corrupt and fallen, sentenced and disgraced ?

Most true it is, though it be passing strange,
The earth has undergone this woful change :
And though in its more highly favoured mien,
It's form be truly such as we have seen ;

Yet may it not that finished beauty boast,
As when, at first, the glad angelic host,
With holy triumph hailed the new made world
Into it's pathless orbit glittering hurled ;
And He pronounced it to be very good,
Who best it's pristine-nature understood. [80
Most true it is man's sin this change has wrought,
And o'er himself a change more grievous brought ;
A fatal change from innocence and bliss,
To conscious guilt and doubtful happiness :
From blest communion with a gracious God,
To dread of vengeance and the chastening rod :
From glad submission to his Maker's will,
To loathing or to suffer, or fulfil :
Has driven him forth from Eden's happy bowers,
To spend in anxious care his weary hours :
By daily toil his daily bread to earn,
Until to kindred dust his dust return.

If this were not so ; but if, guiltless still,
Man never had transgressed his Maker's will,
No willing ear to subtle tempter lent,

No deed had done that God must needs resent,
Nor justice cried aloud for punishment ;
What mean those sounds of agony and woe ?
These sights of misery where'er we go ?
Whence come disease and pain ? and whence came death ?
That terrible power, who all things levelleth ?
These do not sure from One all good proceed,
Except in recompense of evil deed ;
Nor had they place in His all perfect plan,
When moved by goodness, he created man.
On guilt alone does misery attend,
And on rebellion punishment descend.

But who shall dare presumptuously to plead
Man's innocence ? nor, in his blindness, heed
The proofs, the damning proofs, which all around
Bespeak his fall and pravity profound ?
Not in the peaceful walks of rural life
The bitterest fruits of human guilt are rife ;
Not where the rich expend their willing wealth,
To purchase tranquil happiness and health :
Go seek the crowded haunts where mammon plies

His never ceasing task ; where trade employs
Her unwashed myriads : where commerce treads
Upon her loitering heels, and hastening spreads
Her canvass to the breeze, that bears away [120
Successive cargoes from the noisy quay :
There vice in all her hideous forms appears,
And unabashed her brazen front uprears :
There, linked with squalid poverty, she reigns,
And the last dregs of misery's chalice drains.
There angry passions rage without control,
The feelings blunt, and brutalize the soul.
There man his innate selfishness betrays,
And every fraudulent art of gain essays :
Wrings from his neighbour's ignorance or need
The funds which should his hungry children feed ;
Regards with cold indifference the poor,
In vain imploring pity at his door ;
While with the pride of countless wealth he swells,
Each better impulse of the heart repels,
In riotous debauch his leisure spends,
Or o'er the dice in anxious vigil bends,
Rolls in the dust, or wallows in the mire

Of sordid avarice, or impure desire.

Nor are the signs less obvious, that tell [140
Of havoc wild, which erst this globe befel :
Too many proofs th' unwelcome truth declare,
How in the pristine curse the ground had share.
Only for this the thorn and thistle grow,
And noxious weeds their seed spontaneous sow :
While wholesome plants, sustaining human kind,
Are raised by culture of the toiling kind ;
Nor will the niggard earth to man afford
The scantiest pittance of her own accord.

But direr proofs of wrath divine appear,
Daze the dimmed sight, and stun the deafened ear.
Not from fair nature's first created store
The lightning's flash, the thunder's pealing roar ;
The hurricane's wild crash, the tempest's rage,
The conflict fierce, which Earth and Ether wage.
Go where the dread Simoom the desert scours ;
No zephyr that from Eden's peaceful bowers :
Inhale proud Stamboul's pestilential breath ;

And prove it's fated power of noisome death.
Whence rose those mountain cones, those craggy spires,
If not upturned by subterraneous fires ?
How else were formed these huge disjointed rocks,
If not by nature's elemental shocks ?
Why vomits Etna forth volcanic fires,
If blameless man no chastisement requires ?
Such dire portents declare an angry God,
Who lifts on high his sin-avenging rod ;
And foretaste give of conflagration wide,
Foredoomed of Heaven this planet to abide,
When raging fires shall blaze from pole to pole ;
And earth and sky shall vanish as a scroll :
While from the smouldering ashes shall arise,
A fairer world, begirt with fairer skies ;
And the still burning wreck unquenched remain,
The cursed abode of sin-requiting pain.

And yet not always does the sickened sense
Rest on these awful proofs of man's offence :
Not everywhere does desolation rude
It's horrid aspect on the sight obtrude :

Not always do the forked lightnings glare, [180
Nor still continuous thunders rend the air :
E'en Libya's burning desert has its bound,
And fair Oases in it's wilds are found :
The plague-commissioned angel stays his hand,
And spares in mercy many a favoured land :
Not often do the earth's foundations rock,
While pallid nations shudder at the shock :
The spent volcano has it's sleep profound,
When peaceful shepherds dwell secure around,
Nor longer list it's dread ill omened sound.
Nay, such is nature's renovating power,
Such the bland influence of sun and shower,
That barren rocks, prepared by wintry cold,
To give to air-borne seeds precarious hold,
Through process sure of annual decay,
And lapse of ages, ceasing to betray
Their former rugged features, now are seen
Decked in the earth's gay livery of green ;
And scenes, which once th' averted sight had loathed,
Become with softest herbage richly clothed. [200
The yawning crater too, from which on high

The labouring mountain hurled toward the sky,
As if in proud defiance of the Power
That cast them back in devastating shower,
It's burning entrails, while adown it's side
In glowing torrents rolled the lava's tide,
Filled by the dews of heaven, and gentle showers,
Appears a placid lake, begirt with mountain flowers.

Not less the moral world fair proof displays
Of power benign, that evil's progress stays ;
That checks the oppressor's insolent career ;
Unnerves the murderer's arm with sudden fear ;
Confounds the heartless villain's dark designs,
Not to his toils the innocent resigns ;
Frustrates the plans dishonesty has laid,
And makes it of it's own success afraid.
Nor rare, nor yet uncertain is the trace,
Of better influence working in our race ;
Not few, nor vague the arguments that tell
Of hearts reclaimed, and ceasing to rebel ; [220
Of savage natures won to pity's law,
And taught to succour whom they never saw ;

Of angry tempers owning reason's sway,
And headstrong passions practised to obey ;
Of selfishness to self denial changed
And haughty pride with patient meekness ranged ;
Inordinate affections moderate grown,
And appetites depraved to virtue prone.

Yet neither is the pristine curse removed,
Nor earth's subjection to its power disproved ;
Though nature's blessing upon human toil
Has rendered fertile many a barrén soil ;
Though by a process, known to her alone,
What erst was into wild confusion thrown,
Is now reduced to order, and is found
In sweetest harmony with all around ;
Or like some mouldering fane of other days,
Becomes more beauteous, as it more decays ;
Though the dread Thunder cool the sultry air,
And make a fair creation yet more fair ; [240
Though inundations, while they mock man's toil,
Repair his loss, and fertilize the soil ;

Though a benignant Power has still withstood
Destruction's course, or made it serve to good ;
Though human passions own their Maker's sway,
And rebel tempers cease to disobey ;
Though wealth and power their cherished ease forego,
To soothe the ills of penury and woe ;
Though peace and love assert their ancient reign,
And almost seem their empire to regain ;
While hate and discord mitigate their rage,
Nor seek in angry conflict to engage ;
Or, viewed in contrast with revenge and strife,
Appear more fair the charities of life :
Yet is the curse but lightened, not removed,
And man's estate still fallen, tho' improved.

But if a world in ruins seem thus fair ;
If, cursed of God, this rebel earth still bear
Marks, not alone of wisdom and of power ;
But more so if His goodness ; if each hour [260
It minister to man, who sinning wrought
It's ruin, and himself to ruin brought,
Contentments numberless, and pure delight,
If he but use his Maker's gifts aright ;

What pencil may depict, what tongue may tell
Its rare and matchless beauties ere befell
That fatal change ? While yet it's face retained
The recent impress of the Almighty's hand ;
Nor yet had passed away that radiant light,
Than day's meridian splendour far more bright,
Which from the Deity's effulgence shed,
O'er his new-finished work still lingered :
Ere springtide verdure shrunk from Summer's heat
Or Autumn's fruits were nipped by wintry sleet ;
Ere darkling clouds obscured the solar ray,
Or angry storms swept o'er the face of day ;
But the refreshing dews, that cooled the night,
Still fled at the approach of morning's light,
And though the clear and well-tempered air
Shone Nature's glories, more than ever fair : [280
While in the changeful seasons' varied round
No unpropitious influence was found,
But grateful novelty and fresh delight,
To charm the ravished ear, and glad the sight :
When luscious fruits in rich profusion grew,
And fragrant flowers of every brilliant hue :

While birds of gayest plume, and sweetest song,
Trilled their clear notes the odorous groves among :
And countless beasts in frolic gambols played,
Nor yet the strong upon the weaker preyed :
While thro' the limpid streams were seen to glide
Bright fishes, lavish of their scaly pride ;
And, sporting on the deep, Leviathan
Did homage to the sovereignty of man,
The acknowledged Lord of all this fair domain,
And all Creation's ample stores contain ;
Given by his Maker richly to enjoy,
In sole propriety, without alloy
Of pain, disease, or haunting fear of death,
Or ought that full contentment minisheth. [300
While, his declining vigour to recruit,
The tree of life produced its healing fruit,
Sure antidote to Nature's slow decay,
Till passed on earth his long and happy day
Of prosperous trial, man should take the place
Once held in Heaven by that rebellious race
Angelic, who thro' pride, self-tempted fell,
In dire abyss of endless pain to dwell.

And if the beauties of man's lost abode.
That garden planted by the hand of God,
No tongue may suitably extol ; far less
May human language worthily express
The exalted dignity and perfect bliss,
Which in that pure primeval state were his ;
Ere yet by subtle tempter he was foiled,
And of his pristine innocence despoiled ;
Eating the fruit of that forbidden tree,
From whence came death and all our misery :
But still enjoyed entire his Maker's love,
Holding communion with the Powers above, [320
And e'en with Him, the Highest ; in whose works,
Exhaustless theme, nor hidden wisdom lurks,
Nor useful purpose, but his intellect,
Vigorous and clear, it's traces could detect,
Each attribute divine, their seen compare,
With it's imparted image that he bare,
And, in the study of Creation's lore,
Still learned the Great Creator to adore ;
Growing in meetness for that Heavenly state,
Where dwells, in bliss supreme, the Uncreate.

But who may hope to draw aside the veil,
That hides from man that world celestial,
As far surpassing Eden's happy bowers,
As Eden's self this recreant world of ours?
Where throned in glory unapproachable,
The Great Eternal reigns, illimitable
His empire as His power ; whose righteous will
Attendant angels hasten to fulfil,
Thronging his radiant courts in bright array,
Their zealous service emulous to pay : [340
While to the golden harp bright scraps sing
Fresh hymns of praise to their Almighty King ;
And celebrate the wonders of His love,
Displayed in earth below, and heaven above ?

Or who the future blessedness may tell
Of those new heavens and earth, wherein shall dwell
Unsullied righteousness, and perfect peace ;
Whence sin and sorrow shall for ever cease,
When the blest times of restitution come,
Foretold in inspiration's hallowed tome ;

And for the just their mansion is prepared,
A house by no weak mortal hands upreared,
The bright abode of Israel's ransomed seed,
The "New Jerusalem," of which we read,
That once to favoured mortal it was given
To see a vision fair let down from Heaven :
Where visible in His Incarnate Son.
Redemption now complete, and judgment done
Upon his enemies, our God shall reign,
And man His long lost image shall regain, [360
Shall know as he is known ; and such the grace
Of his propitious Lord, shall see him face to face,

'Twere worse than vain, in these high mysteries,
To seek above what's written, to be wise :
What God hath not revealed, let man forbear
Presumptuously to look into ; nor dare,
In lispings numbers, to describe the things,
Which mortal eye ne'er saw, nor language brings
To mortal ear the sound of, nor the heart
Of man e'er yet conceived the smallest part.

SYMPATHY: A TALE.



SYMPATHY :

A TALE.

1.

There is a sympathy of wondrous power,
Which claims such empire in the human breast,
That none who feel it, at whatever hour
Of life's brief day, may question its behest.

2.

It is not Love, though much it bears his mien ;
But it is all too passionless for Love :
It is not Friendship ; such at least, I ween,
As may the hearts of common mortals move.

3.

And yet, perhaps, it is to both akin ;
Love sublimated from it's earthly dross ;
Friendship so pure, that, favour let it win,
It counteth not of labour, nor of loss.

4.

I will not say that it might not become,
Under propitious circumstances, Love ;
Though 'tis a sentiment may seem to some
More suited to a happier state above.

5.

But be that as it may, my tale I'll tell,
And when you've heard it, you perchance may say,
That there are those, who though on earth they dwell,
Inhabit tenements of purer clay.

6.

It once befell, that two of Britain's sons,
Albert and Edwin, both in manhood's prime,
Sought in fair Italy less clouded suns,
More genial seasons, and a warmer clime.

7.

Each was in Hymen's silken fetters bound,
And each his chosen partner thither led ;
To each his happy union had been crowned
With one fair offspring of the nuptial bed.

8.

On Albert and his Laura partial heaven
A boy bestowed, his father's name to bear ;
While a sweet girl had grace to Edwin given,
Her mother's name, and doting love to share.

9.

'Twas on the banks of Como's matchless lake
That first they met, where mutually unknown,
They sought a temporary stay to make,
'Mid scenes that Nature claims as all her own.

10.

I know not if community of speech,
Of country, or of manners might attract ;
Or some mysterious influence might teach,
That Fate had given what mutually they lacked.

11.

But so it was, that from this casual turn,
 So close an intimacy did arise,
And in so brief a space, that all might learn,
 Some potent charm wrought on their destinies.

12.

All were to each, and each to all endeared ;
 But high regard, and strong attachment grew
'Twixt Grace and Albert ; and, as soon appeared,
 Edwin and Laura one to other drew.

13.

'T would seem some dormant sympathy of soul,
 Some strong affinity till then unknown,
Held o'er their hearts unlimited control,
 All other fondness bidding them disown.

14.

And yet 'twas not so : undisputed still
 Connubial love o'er either wedded pair
Maintained his gentle sway ; and to fulfil
 Each tender office was their constant care.

15.

No faithless wish, no recreant desire
Of wavering regard had warning given ;
Or if such rose, 'twas only to retire,
By sense of duty and affection driven.

16.

And as well-tested constancy and truth
Assurance gave that there was nought to fear ;
So confidence, long-proved attachment's growth,
To no malicious whisper lent an ear.

17.

Yet there were those, who harsh construction put
On intimacy all too close declared ;
Nor spared they slanderously to set on foot
Rumours, for which the friends too little cared.

18.

For these, by Fame's exaggerating power,
As undisputed truths were widely spread ;
And reaching Albion's shore in evil hour,
To kindred ears with haste malignant sped.

19.

Then might you see how strong parental love
Refused to credit the unwelcome tale,
How confidence 'gainst dark suspicion strove
To clear the guiltless, whom report spake frail.

20.

Yet that the mouth of slander might be stopped
Command was given to either youthful pair,
Their new-formed mutual acquaintance dropped,
All further intimacy to forbear.

21.

But all in vain : as well might you command
Impetuous Adda* to suspend his course,
And rolling back his waters from the strand,
To seek reluctantly his mountain source.

22.

Prompt answer from the injured friends returned,
The groundless charge indignantly repelled ;
Entreating that the rumour might be spurned,
Nor with the calumny mean parley held.

* A mountain stream which falls into the lake of Como.

23.

To shield, however, from detraction's aim
The blameless wanderers in a foreign land,
Fair Grace's widowed mother thither came,
Associate in the rambles they had planned.

24.

'Twould be a thankless task, were I to trace
Their progress o'er Italia's sunny plains ;
Or tend their steps to each far noted place,
Where treasured work of ancient art remains

25.

Suffice it then to say, no classic ground
Was left untrodden by their eager feet ;
No masterpiece of ancient skill profound,
But they surveyed with admiration meet.

26.

And now the mandate came, but all too soon,
That they to Britain's shores must straight return ;
Yet did they crave it as a valued boon,
To make once more at Como brief sojourn.

27.

Needs must they wish to visit once again
Scenes amid which their intimacy grew ;
And ere they homeward crossed the Alpine chain,
Each cherished recollection to renew.

28.

Each well-remembered place again they sought,
And rambled o'er each path they trod before ;
Remarked the changes three short months had wrought,
Sailed on the lake, or strolled along the shore.

29.

Thus glided by the hours on downy wing,
That marked the period of their bounded stay ;
And now they saw the deepening shadows bring
The unwelcome close of their last happy day.

30.

The wedded pairs had sought upon the lake
The cool refreshing breeze of eventide ;
And watched their little ones delighted take
A parting ramble by the widow's side.

31.

The slackening breeze had almost died away,
And scanty filled the idly fluttering sail ;
Which Edwin lashed securely to the stay,
Anxious to land ere yet the light should fail.

32.

And now they steered directly for the shore,
Nor heard the rising squall's ill-omen'd moan ;
Nor thought of danger till its angry roar
Told to what pitch of fury it had grown.

33.

No time to loose the stubborn sail was given ;
No implement to cut the cord in twain ;
One brief appeal the sufferers' made to heaven,
Nor may we deem that it was made in vain.

34.

The fragile barque went over on its side,
And plunged its living burden in the lake ;
Short space have Grace and Laura to decide
What choice forlorn of succour they shall make.

35.

Each clings with grasp convulsive to the arm
 Stretched out to yield its aid with eager haste ;
And, as if drawn by some controlling charm,
 Each on the other's mate her hope has placed.

36.

But not with equal fortune : Edwin's strength,
 By loose and cumbrous garments baffled sore,
May not sustain his burden ; and at length
 Both he and Laura sink, to rise no more.

37.

Unconscious of his hapless partner's fate,
 Albert his struggle with the waves maintains ;
Nor once permits his efforts to abate,
 Till with his precious load the shore he gains.

38.

Grace now committed to her mother's care,
 He bends his anxious eyes upon the lake ;
But horror-struck perceives no object there,
 Save the wrecked barque, o'er which the billows break.

39

Once more he plunges in the boiling flood,
And stems with frantic strength the surging tide ;
If haply they, the tempest's rage withstood,
Might cling for safety to the vessel's side.

40.

But all in vain ; no sign can he discern
Which may the hope sustain that yet they live :
And now the deepening gloom enjoins return,
If nature still the needful strength may give.

41.

At length he gains, with toil and sorrow spent,
The lonely shore, which yet he will not leave ;
But watches long, with straining eye intent,
The foaming billows, as they fret and heave.

42.

He recks not of the raging of the storm,
The lightning's flash, the thunder's pealing roar,
While yet he may discern the doubtful form
Of that frail barque, which late his Laura bore.

43.

Nor till each object fades in deepest gloom,
Will he forego his hopeless watch to keep ;
Nor credit the inevitable doom
Of those, who 'neath the troubled waters sleep.

44.

But who may tell the youthful widow's grief,
When Albert to his home returned alone ?
When no fond hope might longer yield relief,
And all the sad reality was known

45.

Such painful task the Muse would fain decline,
Nor lift the veil that shrouds the wretch's woes ;
Respect the tears that bathe affection's shrine,
And urge her piteous story to it's close.

46.

The troubled waters rendered up their dead,
To rest unheeded in a foreign grave ;
The fatal shore the stricken mourners fled,
Nor bore to look upon it's treacherous wave.

47.

Their native land a calm retreat supplied,
Where, free from blame and observation rude,
A harsh censorious world might cease to chide,
Nor on their grief or happiness intrude.

48.

And there in strictest amity they dwelt,
Nor sought the solace of a closer tie ;
They uttered not the thought, yet this they felt
Was due to their lost partners' memory ;

49.

And to themselves, disdaining to accord
To foul-mouthed calumny the ready plea,
Might cause the unenquiring to applaud
It's venom'd tale of past inconstancy.

50.

Thus time sped on—When from the village fane,
Their troth new plighted, and the blessing said,
Came forth a youthful pair with bridal train—
'Twas Grace and Albert, in their children wed.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

AFFLICTION.

'Tis not for mortal to repose,
On bed formed only of the rose ;
Or should its flowers and leaves abound,
Its thorn is still amongst them found :
A pang runs through life's chiefest joys,
Which all their sweetness sore alloys :
Nor may complete enjoyment bless
Our largest share of happiness.

Thus was it ever said or sung,
By moralist of every tongue :
'Tis daily proved by those who wealth
Or pleasure buy at cost of health ;
'Tis proved by peers of highest station,
Not less than men of low condition ;
Nor ever monarch wore a crown,
But found the common lot his own,
A path not all with flowers strewn.

Such, doubtless, is man's case ; and yet
'Tis no just ground of sad regret,
Far less of discontented cavil, [20
That all our good is mixed with evil.
Had we from innocence ne'er strayed,
But still our Maker's will obeyed,
He had not raised the chastening rod,
To warn us from the path we trod,
And guide our wandering steps to God :
Afflictions had not then been sent,
As now, for our improvement meant,
To soften hearts which sin has hardened,
To make us meet for being pardoned, [30
To purify affections gross,
And purge them of their earthly dross,
To humanize our selfish natures,
And knit us to our fellow-creatures,
To wake the charities of life,
To kindle ruth, and silence strife,
To humble pride, to soften wrath,
And call the kindly feelings forth ;
To wean us from our worldly toys,
And raise our thoughts to higher joys ; [40

To mind us of those heavenly treasures,
Those perfect, never-fading pleasures,
The purchase of that best of friends,
Whose love all other love transcends,
And which, but for his own demerit,
Each child of Adam may inherit.

Submit we then, with heart resigned,
To what is for our good designed,
And still adore that gracious Power,
Who guards our life from hour to hour.

COUNTRY LIFE.

THrice happy he, who blest with rural ease,
To no corroding cares of life a prey,
Finds home-born joys have still the power to please,
Nor quits the even tenour of his way.

It charms not him to join the city's throng,
In fashion's gaily crowded haunts to stay ;
The night-consuming revel to prolong,
Nor in protracted slumbers waste the day.

The ancestral hall, which to his childish glee
Responsive rung, is still his chosen home ;
The lawns and groves he yet delights to see,
Where he was wont in early youth to roam.

His father's friends, or, have they passed away,
Their children seek his hospitable door ;
Surround his board, and close the cheerful day
In social converse, or improving lore.

With them each animating sport he shares,
That vigour to the mind and body yield ;
Each bold adventure emulously dares,
And proves the perils of the flood and field.

Nor are the claims of poverty forgot,
Nor coldly answered by a menial's hand .
His presence cheers the peasant's lowly cot,
And owns each hind who toils upon his land.

Still as he traverses his wide domain,
Improvement occupies his active mind ;
If waste to plant, or noxious swamp to drain,
His scrutinizing glance may haply find.

To him fair Nature shows each modest charm
Which from her casual guest she coyly hid
Nor veils the virtue of each healing balm,
That still for suffering mortals she provides

Not mammon's gilded bait, nor pleasure's lure
Has power to draw him from his loved retreat
The joys they yield he knows may not endure
Like those that gladden his paternal seat.

There does he blithly spend the circling year,
True to each social and domestic tie ;
Still constant found in duty's hallowed sphere,
Regardful of a higher destiny.

And when at length shall pass the stern decree,
He hopes to calmly close his eyes in death ;
His pillow smoothed by filial piety,
Beneath the roof, where first he drew his breath.

THE HORIZON.

STILL seeks the wandering eye to trace,
With eager ken, that circling line,
Would seem its range o'er boundless space,
With envious limit to confine.

What, though the neighbouring hills are crowned
With waving woods of softest green?
What, though the valley smile around,
Beneath a cloudless sky serene?

With varied beauty all in vain
Does lavish Nature deck the scene :
Still seeks the eye that line again,
Careless of all that lies between.

Just so does fancy love to roam
Along the bounds of time and place ;
As yearning for a brighter home,
In yon illimitable space.

Our lot in fairest ground may fall,
And goodly be our heritage;
Each worldly joy await our call,
Each kindred tie our hearts engage.

Yet though delight the bosom thrill,
And earthly bonds the soul enthrall;
A void is felt, these may not fill,
A bliss required, that will not pall.

And only in that unseen world,
Where disembodied spirits roam,
Will Fancy's pinions e'er be furled,
Or man confess his settled home.

A MORNING DREAM.

UNWELCOME day-light, why dispel
The slumber late so softly fell
Upon my wearied sense, and gave
The disenthralled soul to have
Visions of beauty far more bright
Than dawn upon the realms of light?

Can'st thou in Ocean's bound display
To waking sight so fair a bay,
As that o'er which my fancy's eye
So lately ranged in ecstasy?
Sequestered from the restless deep
By headlands twain of graceful sweep,
Whose lofty capes fit portal formed
'Gainst which the waves all idly stormed,
Like a tumultuous crowd that waits
Impatient at some city's gates,

Nor gained admittance, till subdued
Their useless rage, they humbly sued
To form again their broken ranks
Within the barrier's sheltering banks ; [20
And, hushed their clamour, sank to rest,
Nor stirred the water's tranquil breast ;
In which, as in a mirror bright,
Was seen each lofty wooded height,
The dappled clouds, the azure skies,
Each form that on its bosom lies ;
Where gallant ships at anchor rode,
Rich cargoes waiting to unload,
With blazoned flags, and streamers gay,
As on some joyous holiday ;
And graceful barques, with gilded oars,
Or sought, or left, the enamelled shores,
Each carrying in festive state,
Of squires and dames a goodly freight :
While odorous groves of verdant hue
Their borders to the margin drew ;
And, wafted o'er the waters came
A harmony without a name,

As though a choir of seraphs sung
To golden harps in heaven strung. [40

Or can'st thou, garish daylight, show,
Though in thy sunny beams may glow
Each gorgeous pile by art upreared,
For those a subject world has feared,
Proud palace worthy to compare
With that which crowned yon bay so fair ?
Like Edom's long-lost capital,
Of caverned dome, and living wall ;
Its glistening front the marble rock,
Towering above the tempest's shock ;
Its lofty halls and chambers bright
With native gem and stalactite ;
Where lords and dames, a brilliant throng,
All joyous ranged its rooms among ;
Now at the crystal windows seen,
Contemplating that bay serene ;
Now mixing in the mazy dance,
Their souls resigned to pleasure's trance ;
Now crowding round the festive board,
With choicest wines and viands stored ; [60

Then pacing down the ample stair,
To breathe the fresh and balmy air ?

Thou can'st not, daylight, bring to view
A sight like this my fancy drew ;
Where earth, and sea, and sky combined
With fairest forms of human kind,
Scarce human seeming, to compose
A scene, on which thy sun ne'er rose.

Then leave me to the soothing power,
To whom belongs this witching hour ;
And hide again thy useless glare,
If haply still that vision fair,
Yet undissolved by morning's spell,
In fancy's realms may lingering dwell.
Ah ! no, 'tis fled ; and all in vain
I strive its outline to regain :
As well the bow in heaven recal,
When dewy showers forbear to fall.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

THE torch's light, when newly quenched,
Fresh light will draw from one that's burning ;
How like to love neglect has blenched,
Revived by kindness quick returning.

But all in vain we court the flame,
If once the smoking flax we smother :
No more may love renew the claim
Our coldness forfeits o'er another.

THE SPARROW TO THE YOUNG SPORTSMAN.

THE same creative Power that gave thee birth,
On all that breathe the gift of life bestowed ;
And placed us all upon the common earth,
An ample, happy, and well stored abode.

By that good Providence which cares for thee,
And numbers e'en the hairs upon thy head ;
The flocks and herds are pastured on the lea,
And the wild raven's clamorous young are fed.

'Tis the same God, who gives thy daily food,
That leads the prowling lion to his prey ;
Rears in his house the swailow's callow brood,
And deigns the falling sparrow's fate to weigh.

Use meekly then thy delegated power ;
Respect the right God's creatures have to live ;
Allow to each its heaven-appointed hour,
Nor idly take the life thou didst not give.

SEA-SIDE THOUGHTS.

IN careless mood I pace the strand,
And see the rising tide's approach ;
Yet scarcely note the lessening sand
Contracted as the waves encroach.

At length admonished by the spray,
Which now bedews my loitering feet ;
I seek the shore without delay,
If yet the sea permit retreat.

Just so we tread life's narrow stage,
Aware how short must be our stay ;
Yet mark not how advancing age
Creeps slowly on from day to day.

Nor till the last frail footing fails
Beneath our feeble faltering tread,
Regard we Time's stern voice, that hails
Us doomed associates of the dead.

ON LEAVING POULTON.

POULTON, farewell ! not soon [★] shall I forget
My pleasant visit to thy shore ; and yet
Less for thyself shall I remember thee,
Than for the friends, who kindly summoned me,
To prove with them how balmy is thine air,
How clear thy waters, and thy bay how fair.
And truly thou my gratitude may'st claim
For health amended ; and though plain thy name,
Yet hast thou beauties of thine own to boast,
Well kened of all who sojourn on thy coast ;
Commanding, as thou dost, a varied view
Of lovely Furness, with its hills of blue,
From where bluff Peil his Pharos tower uprears,
And with its welcome light the sailor cheers,
To where Holm island bounds the bay's recess,
Like emerald brooch foreclosing lady's dress ;
And in far distance Cumbria's mountain tops,
Tinged with the golden rays that Phœbus drops,

As in his downward course he seeks to lave
His glowing car beneath the western wave.
But Nereids of Poulton ! waft away the smells,
Which, all unsavoury, issue from the shells
Of luckless fishes left upon thy beach,
Their native element ne'er doomed to reach.
And save me, Poulton, from thy pigs and ducks,
And each marauding animal that sucks
Forth from the house of mussel, or of crab,
Its hapless inmate pierced with murderous stab.
Then, if I'm spared, I'll visit thee once more,
And seek recruited health along thy purer shore.

SCARBOROUGH.

BEHOLD the house, where Tartan Butler, arrant cheat,
Provides her guests with food no teeth can eat ;
Then, murdering sleep, consigns you to a bed,
Filled with the plumes of fowl on which you've fed.

BLACKPOOL.

ADIEU, Blackpool ! where foul Melphitis reigns
In subterraneous realms of filthy drains :
Where dread Miasma all unheeded dwells,
Diffusing far and wide pestiferous smells :
Where gaping sewers belch forth their noxious breath,
Charged with the germs of sickness and of death ;
And poison, as they run, the wholesome breeze,
Which Zephyr wafts across the western seas :
While inky streams pollute the limpid wave,
Wherein Lancastria's nymphs delight to lave.
'Twas not for this that Nature gave thy shore
An air which might our shattered health restore ;
'Twas not for this she rolled upon thy strand
A tide, which might return of health command.
Be true, then, to thyself ; nor cast away
The gifts, which would thy choicest care repay :
Ho ! Dickson, Nickson, Thomson, Simpson, Faint,
And each mine host, enjoying surname quaint,
Turn far away those stench-producing rills,
Or charge a dose of haut gout in your bills.

THE MAIDENS' AFFRIGHT.

YE nymphs, who first beheld the light of day,
When Sol through angry Taurus held his way,
Beware how in sequestered vales ye roam,
Far from the shelter of your happy home ;
Nor tempt the perils of the open field,
No guard at hand his ready aid to yield :
All insecure to you the flowery mead,
Where the sleek herds in dainty pasture feed ;
No safety by the winding river's side,
While in your own protection ye confide.

As late two lovely maidens heedless strayed,
Where Hipper's banks afford an alder shade,
Both wrapt in admiration of the scene,
Which lay before them dressed in brightest green,
Elizabeth discoursing of the view,
Which Ellen with her magic pencil drew,
A furious bull! approached, with sounding feet,
To where the nymphs had found a mossy seat :

Not like Europa's bull, with fond intent
To bear them to some unknown continent, [20
Long waiting to receive their honoured name,
And hand it down to never-dying fame ;
But to transfix them, beauteous as they sat,
His gory horns the ministers of fate.

At first he moved with measured step and slow,
As if uncertain or to come or go ;
Then, as though maddened by some impulse dire,
His fiercely glowing eyeballs flashing fire,
Spurning the ground, and bearing low his head,
Straight to the helpless maids he furious sped.
Like some majestic stream, that calmly rolls
An ample tide, while yet no bar controls
Its onward flow, if haply in its course
Projecting rocks oppose their stubborn force,
Chafed by restraint, impatient of delay,
The foaming torrent throws aloft its spray,
And lashed to rage, with stunning roar and deep,
Rushes in cataract wild adown the steep.

Just so, with headlong rage the monster rushed,
Beneath his ponderous bulk each barrier crushed, [40
And, ere the hapless nymphs had time to flee,
Full in their sight came scouring o'er the lea.

Terrific shrieks now rent the startled air,
No aid at hand, no refuge but despair :
Yet dread of instant death gave wings to flight,
Ere yet their eyes were closed in endless night :
And wisely deeming that one common fate
Might not befall them both, if separate,
Elizabeth invoking Hipper's aid,
More of the field, than of the flood afraid,
Cleared at one bound the river's rugged bank,
And in the midway channel softly sank ;
Her Hipper raised upon his placid breast,
And murmuring safety, lulled each fear to rest ;
Then gave her to his Naiad daughters' care,
Who to a grassy bank the maiden bare.
Ellen, meanwhile, beneath an oaken shade,
Had sought, nor sought in vain, the Dryads' aid,

Who gently led her by a path unseen,
To where her lost companion pressed the green: [60
And now the friends, clasped in each others arms,
Found sweet oblivion of their dire alarms.

THE REMONSTRANCE.

Al! wouldst thou but reflect, fair maid,
Though boasting now thy beauty's power,
How soon the bloom of youth will fade,
Thou'dst give to love each fleeting hour.

Those cheeks, that mock the rose's hue,
Will, all too soon, grow wan and pale ;
Those eyes, that sparkle like the dew,
Grow dim, and all their lustre fail.

Those coral lips, that pledge delight,
Will cease to tempt when shrunk and thin,
Nor, as they part in laughter light,
Display a pearly row within.

That bosom fair, where love would choose
To lay his weary head to rest,
Will all its radiant whiteness lose,
No longer Cupid's favourite nest.

Those raven locks, that brightly fall
In graceful curls adown thy neck,
Will age turn grey, and scant, and all
Thy boasted beauties prove a wreck.

Each fading flower, that earthward fares,
Each unplucked fruit that strews the ground,
Reproves the niggard churl, who spares
To use, where nature's gifts abound.

And keenly will thy wasted charms
Too late reproach that dainty pride,
'That drove each lover from thine arms,
Nor brooked to hear thee called a bride.

THE REPLY.

WHAT ! can a maiden not be fair,
But she must be in marriage given ?
With some vain puppy doomed to share
The choicest gifts of bounteous heaven ?

Is every opening rosebud culled,
Ere yet its full blown beauties fade ?
Is every red-cheeked apple pulled,
Ere yet the worm has on it preyed ?

May not the violet scent the air,
And meekly hang its modest head,
Without proud man's officious care,
And droop upon its fragrant bed ?

The stars that gem the dark blue sky,
Ne'er seek to join their vestal fires ;
And Dian, as the Sun draws nigh,
Still from his ardent gaze retires.

I know that youth will not long tarry,
And beauty's bloom full quickly fades ;
Nor yet the less to those who marry,
Than those who still continue maids.

But virgin hearts ken truer joys,
Than faithless Cupid has to give ;
Nor care, nor jealousy alloys
The blithsome life that maidens live.

Then talk no more to me of love,
Nor think my firm resolve to shake ;
Though fond and constant as the dove,
One like thyself his suit should make.

PULCHERRIMÆ.

I look on thee, but fail to mark,
In thine angelic face,
Aught that denotes, in traces dark,
A fall'n rebellious race.

I see thee raise thy beaming eyes
Of deep ethereal blue ;
'T is only from the vaulted skies
They draw that azure hue.

I hear thee speak ; but tones so sweet
To mortal are not given ;
In such alone do angels greet
The seraphim of heaven.

I see thee smile ; a living light
O'er all thy features plays ;
Not yonder Sun, however bright,
Can boast such gladdening rays

I watch thee shed the pearly tear
At tale of woe forlorn ;
The dew drops are not half so clear,
That glisten in the dawn.

I see thee walk, and in thy gait
Such majesty and ease ;
Not royalty, in all its state,
Has equal power to please.

In every gesture, word, and look,
So ravishing thou art ;
Not long may kindred natures brook
To dwell from thee apart.

Say, art thou then of other race ;
And not of mortal mould ?
Or is it in the power of grace
Such sweetness to unfold ?

'Thou masterpiece of skill divine,
By grace or nature made ;
I look on thee, and scarce repine,
That Eve from duty strayed.

SONG.

YES, there's a charm in beauty's eye,
Which none may brave, which none may fly;
The transient day of youth its hour,
And maiden purity its power,

A plant fair Eve from Eden brought,
To grace her daughters' tender thought;
But erst by hands celestial given,
Plucked from its parent stock in heaven.

Man never can be wholly cursed,
While this fair flower by woman's nursed;
If once 'tis trod beneath her feet,
The loss of Eden's then complete.

OLD SONG.

THE brightest sun will set,
The longest day will close,
And dearest friends that ever met
Must part—to seek repose.

We've waked the early dawn,
We've roused the fallow deer,
We've chased him long with hound and horn,
We've spread our woodland cheer.

Our noon-tide sport to make,
The hawks were on the wing,
And many a hill, and dell, and brake,
Have heard the lure bells ring.

The deer to covert's fled,
The hound to kennel's gone,
The hawk on perch has drooped his head,
And hill and dell are lone.

The feast then we'll prolong,
Nor heed the curfew's toll ;
We'll pass the time with mirth and song,
And drain the cheerful bowl.

The brightest sun will set,
The longest day will close,
And dearest friends that ever met
Must part—to seek repose.

A SONG FOR THE RAIL.

Talk not to me of house and home,
Such things I've long forgot ;
And on the rail for life to roam
Is now my chosen lot.

What care I for the blazing hearth,
Or fireside comforts all ?
The engine's fire to me is worth
All others in bower or hall.

Can you the singing urn compare
With the boiler's roaring hiss?
The clatter of china rich or rare
With the buffers' sounding kiss?

I'll not deny that music's sweet,
And the lady songster's voice;
But sweeter far, when engines greet,
Is the whistle's cheerful noise.

Can note fall softer on the ear,
Than the lull of the slackening train?
Or crashing chorus semblance bear
To its roar through the mountain chain?

The mazes of the lively dance
Let others with rapture hail:
No mazes me so much entrance,
As those of the iron rail.

The sluggish walk, the stupid drive,
Or the speed of one-horse power,
How can these the spirits revive,
Like fifty miles in an hour.

It charms not me to dine in state,
 Attended by lackies fine :
My meals I bolt at railway rate,
 In the rooms along the line.

I scorn on beds of down to lie,
 Close curtained with damask round ;
My rest I snatch, as on we fly,
 Lulled by the engine's sound.

Then place my van upon the rail,
 For other home I'll have none ;
Nor house but that which, like the snail,
 I carry my back upon.

TO A PRETTY AND WITTY YOUNG LADY.

That you are pretty, I'll avow ;
That you are witty, I'll allow ;
 And yet I can't admire ;
Your prettiness you know too well ;
Your wittiness is like a bell,
 That Momus e'en would tire.

PROMETHEUS.

THAT chilly mortals might no longer shiver,
'Tis said Prometheus stole celestial fire ;
And for the theft a vulture tore his liver,
In token of Jove's unrelenting ire.

In sooth, he merely lighted his cigar,
Whereof he was the first to prove the use,
Scaling the sky, at some far twinkling star,
And Jove foresaw tobacco's vile abuse.

ON A PENURIOUS OLD WOMAN WHO
SOLD GRAPES.

ZEUXIS, so ancient authors say,
The clustering grapes so well pourtrayed ;
That birds, to feed, their flight would stay ;
By the great painter's art betrayed.

No limner's aid need Straba seek,
To show that she has grapes to sell :
Secure from each incredulous beak,
The purple fruit will serve as well.

EPITAPH ON A DEAD DOG.

HERE lies, unconscious of the galling lash,
Or pitying caress, the faithful Dash ;
No more to cleave the flood with headlong splash,
Nor scour the tangled copse with heedless crash ;
On sturdy tramps his grinning teeth to gnash,
Nor greet them slily with a parting gash :
He died, alas ! of eating too much trash,
For in his diet he was somewhat rash ;
And health and appetite are found to clash
In other animals than poor, old, Dash.

EPIGRAM.

By Fortune's favouring smile transformed,
The low-bred snob familiar grows ;
As muck-born flies in sunshine warmed;
Audacious settle on your nose.

TO A JEW FALLEN INTO A BOG ON SATURDAY.

CHRISTIAN.

NATHAN ; are you the luckless wight
I see in such unsavoury plight ?
Stretch out your hand, that I may try
To raise, and set you high and dry.

JEW.

Forbid it, heaven, that men should say,
Nathan profaned the Sabbath-day ;
Though foul the place, I'll here remain,
Nor seek my footing to regain.

CHRISTIAN.

Then, though I much regret 'tis you,
I'll not outdone be by a Jew ;
So stay you there, and stink till Monday,
For draw you out I'll not on Sunday.

N.B. The above has no political bearing.

TO A WIFE.

AH ! hard condition of a mortal state !

That man must needs with fickle woman mate :
That as each race resigns this vital breath,
Birth only may supply the waste of death.

In Eden's happy bowers, we freely own,
It was not good for man to be alone ;
For paradise had seemed less passing fair,
Without a mate its pure delights to share.

But when from innocence frail woman fell,
And, with her, man, it surely had been well,
Their reason weak, their passions headstrong grown,
If now unmated, each had lived alone.

Creative power might still have filed the world
With Adam's sons : nor by Deucalion hurled,
And anxious Pyrrha, had been felt the need
Of fabled stones, to raise a mortal seed.

To man alone applies this law of life,
And to the tribes with which the earth is rife;
No longer subject to its tyrant yoke,
When once at length from death's long sleep awoke.

Oh ! blissful state of sainted souls above,
Who prove the raptures of seraphic love ;
Who marry not, nor are in marriage given,
But singly blest, as angels are in heaven.

No discord breaks their everlasting rest ;
No jars disturb the mansion of the blest ;
Nor ever, save in their Creator's praise,
Its meek inhabitants their voices raise.

Whatever else of heavenly bliss there be,
'Twere more than happiness enough for me,
While I thy sole felicity shall see,
To know that I'm no longer wed to thee.

THE ODONTALGIST'S PETITION :

A PARODY.

PRY the sorrows of a pain-struck man,
Whose aching jaws have brought him to your door ;
Whose ease is dwindled to the narrowest span ;
Oh ! draw his teeth, and add them to your store.

These haggard looks my agony bespeak ;
These folded shawls betray my anxious fears ;
And many a hollow, in my sunken cheek,
Tells of a grinder lost in by-gone years.

Yon shop, conspicuous on the rising ground,
With tempting fragrance drew me from my road ;
For pastry there a residence has found,
And sweetmeats a magnificent abode.

Hard is the fate of teeth decayed and poor !
Here, as I munched a knob of gingerbread,
A pang of tooth-ache drove me from the door,
'To seek a dentist, and a tear to shed.

Oh ! take me to your operating room :

Keen is the pain ; your steel is icy cold ;
Yet quickly past the inevitable doom,
My teeth are loose, and miserably old.

Should I reveal the holes that cause my grief,
If succedaneum on your table rest ;
Your hands will not withhold its kind relief,
And drops of laudanum will not be repress.

Age brings misfortune : why should we repine ?
'Tis age has brought me to the state you see :
And your condition may be soon like mine,
The child of tooth-ache, and of misery.

A pearly set was my paternal lot ;
Then like the lark I whistled to the morn :
But ah ! hard usage made them all to rot,
The front are broken, and the grinders worn.

My eye teeth, once the comfort of my age,
Torn by a quack forth of their native home,
Were cast unheeded underneath the stage,
With which he used from fair to fair to roam.

My tender gums, despite of all my care,

Still smart with anguish from the villain's key ;

Leaving no refuge, but in much despair.

To unabated hunger, and to me.

Pity the sorrows of a pain-struck man,

Whose aching jaws have brought him to your door ;

Whose ease is dwindled to the narrowest span ;

Oh ! draw his teeth ; and they will ache no more.



THE PARSON TO THE JUSTICE.

WHILST you the burden of the Peace sustain,

And make the bench no less beloved and feared,

Me ducal wrath impropriate pursues,

And tithe-sprung tyranny for laymen made.

Twice five times up the azure steep of heaven

The god of day his easy way has won ;

Twice five times in his downward course has quenched

His glowing orb beneath the western wave ;

Since one of gloomy look, and sinister,
As on discreditable errand bound, [10
Or brooding mischief, sought my rural manse.
The hospitable door, wide open thrown,
Gave unsuspecting welcome ; when the wretch,
Protruding from his dark and brawny paw
A dirty scroll, whether papyrus made
From ancient Nile, with hieroglyphics filled,
Or Punic characters, or Erse, uncertain :
The careful handmaid, who the scrawl received,
Suspecting witchcraft, or demoniac fraud,
Straight to the flames consigned it ; and avers, [20
That as it burned, a blue sulphureous smoke
In circling columns rose, and filled the kitchen :
Incontinent the messenger had vanished :
Yet whither, none could tell. But omens dire,
And dark conclusions from his visit drawn,
Of death, disease, or worse calamity,
'Th' household impending, or 'mongst the cattle
Murrain, or speed, or calves too early dropped,
Defrauding of its due the foaming pail,
Or measled pigs, and savoury bacon's dearth, [30

Or glandered horse, or smut among the wheat.
Or dry-rot blight infecting the potatoes,
Dismayed our hearts, and struck with chilly fear.

As when a deadly plague, or cholera
Invades of sudden some thick peopled city,
As Istamboul, or Alexandria,
(Far from these favoured shores such pest be turned!)
Stilled is the busy hum of men: their haunts,
Silent and desolate, no sound of joy,
Of feast or lively dance, of harp or viol, [40
Nor e'en of human voice, is heard to cheer.
If in some void and silent thoroughfare,
Seeking the useless leech, or buryers' aid,
Man meet perchance his fellow, pass they on,
No word of greeting uttered, each his way,
Nor sound, save of their echoing steps, awakes.

Just so, as if by some malignant spell,
Or incantation bound, with mute dismay,
And silent horror, each the other viewed,
As one to death, or dire disaster doomed. [50

Those ten dull days dragged on their tedious length,
Like the ten years of Greece beleaguered Troy,
By Argive maids detested. Mark the event !
The eleventh morn upon the empurpled East
Had scarcely risen, when the self same maid,
Who all unwitting took the fatal scroll
From the mysterious visitant, descried,
As she the streams lacteal drew alternate
From the capacious fount quadrifidal
Of Dewlap, or of Daisy, matchless kine !
(Which claimed her care dread fear oblivion caused)
With stealthy step approach that hated form,
On memory's page in darkest lines inscribed.
That well known form discerned, no more she saw,
But instant issuing from the fragrant byre,
Straight to the manse returned, unheeded all
The inverted pail, and waste of milky store.
Of corpse-like hue, with haggard look and wild,
She reached the threshold, and with faltering voice,
" He's come !" she cried, and fell in deadly swoon. [70

Libations ample from the limpid spring,
And pungent odours from a crystal vase,

With potent drugs of rarest virtue stored,
Whether from Araby, or farthest Ind,
The treasured wealth of aged Margaret,
Brought back to consciousness the hapless maid.
In broken sentences, scarce audible
For sighs profound and mingled sobs convulsive,
The fearful truth declared, I issued forth
To reconnoitre : yet, with prudent care [80
First took, as 'gainst a subtle foe unknown,
My trusty arms, engines cylindrical,
That cast with aim precise the spheric lead.

Protected thus, myself unseen, I watched,
From closest ambuscade, the wretch profane
Sieze the reluctant inmates of the byre
By unoffending horn, and mark upon
Each milk-white head the symbol of the cross,
With pigment of a rich and vermiel hue.
That sacred emblem seen relieved my mind [90
From further fear of foul demoniac art ;
Yet silent still and secret I observed
His motions : when a meek-eyed calf he dragged

From near recess, of Dewlap's spotless breed ;
And while the innocent his fingers sucked,
Nauseous to think of ! he upon its head
Like sign imprinted as upon its dam.
From neighbouring covert next two grunting swine,
By soft persuasion coaxed, he safely housed
Within the ample byre, marked in like guise. [100
And now each beast of cloven hoof secured,
And signed with holy cross, he locked the door :
Then from his pouch profound a scroll he drew,
On which with pen in sable vial dipped,
From button-hole dependent, he inscribed
Mysterious characters ; and folding up
The dusted spell, straight to the manse conveyed.
My ambush left, with hasty step I follow :
And ere the apparition of the wretch
Should cause a fresh alarm, myself received [110
From the swarth villain's hand the mystic scroll.
No word exchanged, he vanished as at first :
Th' expanded page and all its dire contents
With hasty glance and anxious I survey :—
A death-like shudder ran thro' all my limbs,

As horror-struck I read therein inscribed
Against the harmless tenants of the byre,
Dread threats of exile from their native home,
And venal transfer to some unknown lord,
Unless within the space of five short days, [120
(To Nineveh were granted eight times five)
Their hapless master to a noble peer
Pay down in full his consecrated tenths ;
Tenths set apart by ancient piety
As sacred to religion's holy cause,
Diverted now to laymens' use profane.

Without delay my palfrey I demand,
And to a grave and trusty counsellor,
Well learned in the law, make prompt resort.
With placid look profound, and mute regard, [130
He listened to my tale ;—then made response :
“ 'Tis not for clerks to pay, but gather tithe :
“ Yet seeing law is dear, and doubtful too,
“ Thou a mere parish priest, and he a lord,
“ My counsel is, to pay what he demands.”

NOTE.—The simplicity of the six following pieces may perhaps excite a suspicion that they have been copied from the unpublished MSS (if, indeed, any remain unpublished,) of a deceased Laureate: the reader is, however, assured, that such is not the case; notwithstanding, the practice of that great poet, while it warrants the surmise, fully sanctions such a style of composition.

THE OLD POET'S WISH.

I WOULD I were yon little boy,
In jacket neat and round !
I would I had his pretty toy
Of sweet and tinkling sound.

No joys like those of infancy
Are found in after life ;
No charm like sweet simplicity
In children, friend, or wife.

I'm weary of the ways of man,
His aims and projects all ;
I fain would end as I began,
And play at top and ball.

For better 'tis to spin a top,
Than spin one's crazy brain ;
To drive with stick a jingling hoop,
Than bargain drive for gain.

'Tis quite as well to nurse a doll,
As nurse a squalling brat ;
To talk awhile to pretty Poll,
As talk to titled flat.

'Tis safer far to draw a mill,
Or house upon a slate ;
Than draw a check, or draw a bill,
At long or early date.

I'd rather hear old Sarah tell
A tale of goblin sprite ;
Than verses touching Peter Bell,
Or Betty Foy indite.

For what is fame, or what is power,
Or what ambition's joy ;
What hoarded wealth, or beauty's flower ;
What else than manhood's toy ?

In this alone dissimilar
To those of earlier years ;
They render us familiar
With misery and tears.

'Tis kindly then ordained for man,
Foredoomed to toil and pain,
That ere he pass life's narrow span,
He grow a child again.

And pleasing is the thought to me,
That childhood shall return :
When I again, with merry glee,
Shall sing, " Churn, butter, churn !"

Then farewell, every worldly thing,
Beset with anxious fears ;
And welcome dotage, if it bring
The joys of early years.

TO A PIG.

PIGGY! what are you about,
Tossing up your saucy snout,
With such a flout?

Has it come into your mind,
That there's something in the wind,
Which you could find?

Know you that 'tis going to rain?
Are you of your cunning vain?
And us disdain?

Surely you're no stupid brute,
Only made to grunt and root,
Although you're mute.

Pigs are greedy; that is true:
So are men, as well as you;
And women too.

Dirty, too, you are ; but why ?
Don't they shut you in a sty ?
And there you lie ?

Piggy ! you are quite as good,
When your nature's understood,
As other mud.

TO TWIN CALVES.

Poor things ! you must have passed a weary time,
Shut up all winter in this noisome cote ;
Imprisoned three long months, yet for no crime,
For you could neither poach, nor forge bank note.

I really think, we hardly have a right
To keep you here so long in durance vile ;
Pent up in wretched dungeon, dark as night,
Your only air-hole that small broken tile.

I wonder if you know when you were born ;
Or if you tthink that you're not born at all ;
From your fond lowing mother rudely torn,
And straightway tethered to this dismal wall.

Oh, what a dull monotony of life !
To lie for three long months in that dark place :
Your only change, to hear the farmer's wife
Come morn and eve at one unvarying pace :

To feel the piggin, which you cannot see,
And drink the milk that you would rather draw,
As Nature's instinct prompts you, but which we,
For reasons to ourselves best known, abhor.

And yet, poor things, still worse had been your fate,
Still more deplorable your wretched plight,
Had you been tied in dungeons separate,
Deprived, as well of company, as light.

Some comfort to you, doubtless, it has been,
To know that each was to the other near ;
And though no kindred feature could be seen,
By mutual blats your common gloom to cheer.

But days are lengthening, though you know it not,
And warmer suns will grass and freedom bring :
Then all your miseries will be forgot,
And you, like other calves, shall skip in Spring.

TO THE SAME TURNED OUT.

Now then you are, what Nature made you, free :
No longer pent within that gloomy cote :
Allowed at length the light of heaven to see,
And listen to the warbling throistles' note.

No wonder you so stupidly should gaze
On each strange object that you see around ;
That a new world your senses should amaze,
Or that you start at each unwonted sound.

I love to mark your innocent surprise,
To watch the working of each wakened sense ;
The meekness mirrored in those mild blue eyes,
That say, you neither mean, nor take offence.

And then to see the heedless gate ye gang :

Your headlong gambols, and your merry whim
Your utter carelessness of fall or bang,
So you may practice your untutored limbs.

Of all the races that were ever run,

By horses, donkeys, or by men in sacks,
None can surpass, in real genuine fun,
A match of calves, fresh loosed from their racks.

Enjoy then, while you may, youth's happy hour ;

For I could almost wish myself a calf,
Renouncing all the boast of reason's power,
If I could be as frisky, or but half.

THE PET LAMB.

AND art thou, lambkin, doomed to die,
 Beneath the butcher's ruthless knife?
So soon to close each meek, blue eye;
 So soon to yield thy harmless life?

Can luxury brook no coarser food;
 Nor listen to thine artless plea?
Must mortals live by shedding blood;
 The blood of innocents like thee?

Shalt thou no longer frisk and play?
 No longer hear the welcome call
To share my meal at break of day,
 And when the shades of evening fall?

Dear father, spare my darling pet;
 No right has Death to one so young:
If die it must; not yet, not yet;
 While every hedge with flowers is hung.

Then send that cruel man away,
I cannot bear his savage look ;
Oh ! never more would Nell be gay,
If he my pretty playmate took.

THE BUTCHER'S BOY.

TAKE, master, take the cruel knife,
I cannot kill this pretty lamb ;
It pleads so meekly for its life,
So fondly calls upon its dam.

It kens my voice, it licks my hand,
And looks up in my well-known face ;
Oh ! let me loose each galling band,
And lead it from this frightful place.

It was my little sister's pet ;
I cannot take its tender life :
Oh ! how would gentle Nelly fret,
To think it died beneath my knife.

I have at home a guinea bright ;
And gladly will I make it thine,
Before another morning's light,
If thou wilt say the lamb is mine.

And oh ! to learn this horrid trade,
Forgive me, but I ne'er can brook :
I sicken at the reeking blade ;
I cannot bear on blood to look.

Then do, kind master, let me go,
And with me take our pretty pet :
You will not, cannot say me " No ;"
And Nelly shall be happy yet.

THE DEAD SOLDIER.

THOU art not dead, my soldier brave !

Thou must not die, my husband dear !

I cannot yield thee to the grave ;

I cannot look upon thy bier.

Then speak, and tell me thou dost live :

Unclose once more thy heavy eye :

Some sign, some cherished token give.

May feed the hope thou wilt not die.

Alas ! alas ! he makes no sign ;

That tuneful voice is mute for ever :

He heeds not, hears not word of mine ;

Those eyes unclosed not, never ! never !

Too truly did my heart forebode

This cruel doom of ruthless fate ;

Which, like a nightmare's frightful load,

Upon my weary spirit sate.

Ah ! could but they, who sit on thrones,
And o'er the world their sceptres wield,
Once listen to the dying groans,
That sweep along the battle field ;

Could they but see the widow's tears,
And hear the orphan's piteous cry,
That mingle strangely with the cheers,
The thrilling shouts of victory ;

Less arrogantly would they deem
Of glory, and a warrior's fame :
Too costly would their triumphs seem,
Too dearly bought a conqueror's name.

Yet bear I not a coward heart,
Unworthy of a soldier's wife ;
Nor would thou hadst not borne the part
Beseeemed thee in the mortal strife.

'Twill soothe my bitter grief to know,
That thou obey'dst thy country's call ;
That whither duty bade thee go,
Thou wentest, though it were to fall.

SALLY AND LETTY :

A DOMESTIC ECLOGUE.

SALLY.

Oh ! for a world, where dust and dirt are not !
Where housemaids' miseries might be forgot !
No sooner is this parlour clean and neat,
Than in comes master with such dirty feet,
And two such nasty pointers at his heels,
I wonder how he bears to eat his meals :
For there, on either side, they watching sit,
Their filthy chaps a watering for each bit
He puts into his mouth ; while now to this,
And then to that, whether they catch or miss, [10
He throws a morsel ; till the clean swept floor
With crumbs of bread and meat is scattered o'er.

LETTY.

And ever ere he sits him down to eat,
As if, forsooth, he had done some mighty feat,

He o'er the polished side-board spreads his game,
Which to the house cook wishes never came.
I wonder how a man with any brains
Can spend his time, and take such weary pains,
Heedless of weather, careless how he fares,
And all to kill poor partridges and hares. [20
I'm sure our master works like any brick,
That labours all the day with spade and pick :
But then 'tis not his family to support ;
He bears the toil, because he deems it sport.

SALLY.

What sport he finds in killing them, poor things !
In breaking harmless creature's legs and wings,
I can't conceive : one day I saw him bring
A poor hen partridge with a broken wing ;
And had you seen the meek, upbraiding look
She fixed upon him, never would you brook [30
To hear with patience of such cruel sport,
Nor help but shudder at a gun's report.
Some other wound she had, and by and by
She drooped her head, and closed her languid eye ;

Then once or twice gasped painfully for breath,
And then she lay so still and calm in death,
So beautiful and tranquil in her rest,
She minded me of one, who now is blest:
And whenso'er I think how Nelly died,
I see the partridge lying by her side. [40

LETTY.

Aye, that poor partridge met a hapless fate,
And one that you may well compassionate :
The keeper said, that when the birds were sprung,
She lagged behind ; and, to secure her young,
Pretended lameness, nor would leave the spot,
Till the young brood were fairly out of shot :
And then she rose to follow them ; but fell ;
Her only crime, she loved her young too well.

SALLY.

Poor bird ! But have you heard the piteous tale
Of Joe the poacher, who was sent to jail, [50
And caught the fever there ? and how his wife,
Who went to see him, now despairs of life ?

The doctor says, 'twas all through lack of food,
And being in a low, dejected mood,
She took the infection ; and is now so weak,
He scarce can feel her pulse, or hear her speak.
If she should die, whatever will become
Of those five little ones she has at home ?
It seems a cruel punishment to bear
For nothing worse than setting of a snare. [80
I could not, Letty, love the man who told
Of Joe's offence, and got him into hold.
You know, being out of work, he wanted bread ;
And his poor hungry children must be fed.
I'd sooner far have helped him to a hare,
Than told of him, because he set a snare.

LETTY.

The keeper, Sally, must his duty do,
And deal with all alike, no matter who ;
'Tis not for him to favour, or to fear ;
Nor can he help it, if the law's severe. [70
If men will poach, the squire must prosecute ;
Or there would soon be little game to shoot.

And how should Wadding, or his master know,
That Joe's imprisonment would turn out so?
I'm sorry for them, Sally; but the blame
Is wholly Joe's, for meddling with the game:
And, surely, it was foolish of his wife
To venture where she knew the fever rife.

SALLY.

How can you, Letty, use so harsh a word?
'Twas only now you pitied the poor bird, [80
Which, to protect her young, exposed her life;
And would you blame Joe's fond, devoted wife,
For comforting her husband in his pain,
Whom she might never see alive again?
Besides, the danger had not been so great,
But for her feeble and dejected state.
Oh, Letty! if but half the money spent
In tenting game, among the needy went,
Men would not then turn poachers from distress
Occasioned by no wilful idleness. [90
But where did you that lovely ribbon buy?
It matches your complexion charmingly;

No wonder you should win the keeper's heart,
So pretty looking, and withal so smart.

LETTY.

Fye! fye! Why then I bought it at the door,
Of one we both have traded with before.
But come along; 'tis time we made the beds;
Talking so much, I think, has turned our heads.
As soon as Joe's poor wife can relish food,
I'll see that Wadding sends her something good.

TITYRUS AND CORYDON.

AN AUSTRALIAN PASTORAL.

PREFATORY REMARK.

Should the alternate couplet, employed in the two following eclogues, be deemed too artificial for pastoral poetry, or the sentiments expressed in them unsuited to the character of shepherds, the reader must bear in mind that the *Custodes Ovium* of the new continent are, not unfrequently, younger sons of good, and even noble families in England; who have been driven into exile by the revolution of property, which has been quietly, but steadily, going on there, ever since the return to a metallic currency, and the adoption by the government of principles favourable only to the commercial and monied interests.

TITYRUS LOQUITUR.

SAY, gentle Corydon, what dire mischance

Drove thee an exile to this joyless shore?

Of whom the syren song and mazy dance

In happier years were still the favourite lore?

In these dull wilds no maiden's tuneful voice

E'er cheers the weariness of daily toil;

Nor evening's respite gives the grateful choice

Of other games, than those are taught by Hoyle.

The shepherd's pipe, and, whiles, the plaintive flute,
Send forth, perchance, a solitary air ;
While the gay tenants of the grove are mute,
As yet untaught by songsters still more fair.
Men, men alone, the boundless pasture range,
Their ceaseless task, the charge of ewes and rams ;
But not a shepherdess, 'tis true, though strange,
Is seen in tendance of the tender lambs.

CORYDON.

Thrice happy land ! thus may you long remain,
Free from the presence of the fickle fair !
A calm retreat for each deluded swain,
Whom woman's faithlessness has bid despair.
The syren song, and dance, may well be spared,
If peace, at such an easy rate, be ours ;
Nor would I that the tuneful voice were shared
By the mute tenants of these leafy bowers.
But, ah ! not long will meddling woman rest,
Debarred of access to this favoured shore ;
Not long, O Tityrus, shall we be blest
With happiness man ne'er enjoyed before.

Full soon shall ocean foam beneath the weight
Of cargoes, such as Sultans cannot boast ;
And vessels, teeming with a female freight,
Shall bear Europa back to Asia's coast.

TITYRUS.

Heaven speed the hour, and further Nature's will !
“ It is not good for man to be alone : ”
Let woman come, her mission to fulfil,
“ Flesh of man's flesh, and bone of human bone.”
But tell me, Corydon, what grievous wrong
Thus dashed thy hopes, and drove thee to despair ;
Who, heretofore, the envious swains among,
Wast still the constant favourite of the fair ?
Nay, Fame, who visits each remotest land,
Had brought us tidings of thy happiness ;
That Lycoris had plighted thee her hand,
And early nuptials would complete thy bliss.

CORYDON.

And fame spoke truth ; but ne'er do thou believe
False woman's word, however sweetly given ;

Nor trust in vows, made only to deceive,
Which bind not her, though registered in heaven.
A wealthier mate than Corydon was found ;
And she, whom I so fondly thought my own,
By solemn pledge, nor plighted promise bound,
The bride of rich Geoponus is known.
But gentle Tityrus, I fain would know,
Why thou did'st leave thy happy native land ;
Self-doomed the sex's converse to forego,
And slight the great Creator's prime command.

TITYRUS.

'Twas poverty that drove me from my home ;
My frugal state unable to maintain :
No willing exile, but compelled to roam,
And seek my fortune o'er the restless main.
Free trade and taxes, Corydon, make England poor :
To these my weary banishment I owe :
These brought the ravening wolf within my door,
And from my mortgaged homestead bade me go.
Ah ! dear abode ! I never more shall see ;
Nor wish to see, now in a usurer's hands ;

Where sped my childhood in light hearted glee,
 Shared by the village school's associate bands.
How oft in harmless gambols have we played,
 When from the day's dull task at length released,
Beneath the fragrant linden's ample shade
 And on the grass-plot spread our simple feast !
How oft with blindman's buff, or hide and seek,
 Beguiled the twilight hours, too quickly spent,
While at some idle prank, or waggish freak,
 Burst forth anew our noisy merriment.
Delightful days, doomed never to return !
 Dear joyous faces, ne'er to be forgot !
Still, still shall Tityrus his exile mourn,
 And to these savage wilds bemoan his lot.

CORYDON.

No rare misfortune, Tityrus, is thine ;
 Thousands bewail the same hard lot, and yet
It ill becomes the manly to repine,
 And waste his hours in profitless regret.
Another world demands another mind ;
 A dauntless spirit suits an exile's state ;

Nor should the olden ties of country bind
The banished victim of relentless fate.
Shake off that longing for thy native soil,
Her children's love unworthy to retain ;
Where purse-proud wealth but mocks at patient toil,
And nought is fostered save commercial gain :
More dear to me the freedom of the bush,
Its calm repose, and peaceful solitude,
Than fairer lands, where honesty must blush
For woman's broken faith, and man's ingratitude.

TITYRUS.

'Tis easy, Corydon, to counsel those,
Who suffer ills, from which ourselves are free :
But not so easy to forget the woes,
For which time only proves a remedy.
Yet might it tend our mutual griefs to cheer,
If thou with me this ample run would'st share ;
If thou would'st bring thy flock, and settle here,
The partner of my station, and my care.
Three purling streams refresh the verdant plain,
Of easy access to the thirsty flock ;

Yon broad enclosure wares its golden grain,
Fair promise of abundant winter's stock.
Five gentle kine in bounded pasture range,
Their udders bursting with the milky flood ;
While swine and poultry yield a grateful change,
With frequent litter, and prolific brood.
And ample space this station will afford
For noontide shelter, and for night's repose,
When hunger minds us of the social board,
Or evening brings our labours to a close.

CORYDON.

Your offer, Tityrus, I gladly take ;
And thank my fortune that I hither came :
No new acquaintance do I care to make,
Nor wish to greet a less familiar name.
Ten faultless ewes, of pure merino blood,
Big with the promise of a double stock,
And two like rams whose horns begin to bud,
Just landed from the ship, compose my flock.
These from the plains of Saxony I brought,
With care selected and unusual cost.

At Melbourn left, whilst I a station sought,
Till here propitious fate my purpose crossed.
Whatever more than these is fairly due,
In full requital of thy ceded right,
Shall then be paid in money good and true,
Whene'er the scrivener shall the grant indite.

TITYRUS.

Small recompense may well suffice for him,
Who seeks not wealth, and wearies of the bush :
But step within, and rest each way-worn limb,
Reclined on layer of the platted.rush.
I will, the while, infuse the fragrant tea,
Not here, alas ! the province of the fair ;
And, due refreshment for myself and thee,
Boil new-laid eggs, and savoury ham prepare.

DAMON AND MENALCAS.

AN AUSTRALIAN PASTORAL.

DAMON.

How fares Menalcas? On what errand bound,
Comes he thus late across the pathless wild?
Hardly have I my well known station found,
To linger in the bush too long beguiled.
Seeks he his wandering flock, perchance astray;
Or helpful hands to shear the burdened sheep?
Welcome to Damon's aid at break of day,
And to this hut for needful food and sleep.

MENALCAS.

Thanks, gentle Damon, for thy proffered aid;
But not to ask assistance am I here:

Neither into the bush my sheep have strayed,
Nor, sooth to say, have I a flock to shear.
Such humble cares henceforward we may spurn,
And scorn the toils of patient industry ;
Labours that yield so slender a return,
And wearisome alike to me and thee.

DAMON.

What means Menalcas ? Have some lucky news,
From England brought, of rich old uncle's fate,
Released from irksome care of lambs and ewes,
The owner of a long withheld estate ?
Or has a second railway king appeared ;
And cooking the accounts of cost and fares,
While he some hundred thousand pounds has cleared,
Increased the value of thy scrip and shares ?

MENALCAS.

Expect no lucky news from England's shore ;
Where on Menalcas fortune never smiled :
No second Hudson can my wealth restore,
Nor will that stern old man be reconciled.

Yet heed not this : a happier lot is ours,
No longer doomed to prove the vain caprice
Of fickle fortune ; nor to spend the hours
In quest of other than a golden fleece.
The fables, Damon, of our boyish days,
As sober truths at Melbourn are avowed ;
The golden fleece an easy search repays,
No dragon slain, no field with wild bulls ploughed
Here the famed gardens of th' Hesperides,
Whose golden fruit invites our tardy hands ;
And here, his riches borne to other seas,
The true Pactolus rolls his golden sands.

DAMON.

Something of this I heard, when I was down,
Ten days ago, to sell my fleecy store :
I noted less of bustle in the town,
And fewer folk than I had seen before.
My business done, and anxious to get home,
I asked few questions, and was merely told
That way-worn men from Ballarat had come,
And brought strange tidings of a mine of gold.

MENALCAS.

Not tidings only, Damon, did they bring ;
Or they perchance had found their errand vain :
But they were bearers of the very thing,
The best of arguments our faith to gain.
These eyes have seen it, and these hands have poised
The precious metal, pure as though refined ;
And now I come, ere yet the fact be noised
Abroad, to warn thee not to lag behind.
All Melbourn's thither bound ; and it were well
We bore in mind that ancient adage true,
" First come, first served : " it never yet befel,
But laggards lived their laziness to rue.

DAMON.

But in whose charge, Menalcas, hast thou left
The helpless flock, till now thy proper care ?
In hireling's hands, and of their lord bereft,
'Twere easy to foretell how they will fare.
Catarrh, thou know'st, is in the neighbouring runs,
Wild dogs, in packs, are hovering all around :

More fitting time to muster all the guns,
And urge the vigorous chase with horse and hound.

MENALCAS.

No longer, Damon, master of a flock,
To one of less ambitious temper sold,
At all such dreaded dangers I may mock,
Which move not him whose surer trust is gold.
Nor choice was left me : powerless to retain
Impatient shepherds urgent to be gone,
My flock unshorn, 'twere useless to remain,
If so inclined ; for what could I, alone ?

DAMON.

But what appliance for the lonesome way
Dost thou design ? and how would'st thou propose
To make provision for a lengthened stay,
Each day's returning wants and nights' repose ?
Should all thine expectations be made good,
And, Midas like, whate'er thou touch be gold ;
Yet would'st thou give it all for warmth and food,
When sorely pinched by hunger and by cold.

MENALCAS.

All these things have been cared for ; and a dray,
Laden with tools, and tents, and needful fare,
In charge of trusty friends, is on the way,
Which thou, with us associate, may'st share.
Refreshed by needful food and quiet sleep,
I haste to join them with the early dawn ;
To other care commit thy wretched sheep,
And follow after, nor my counsel scorn.

DAMON.

Think not, Menalcas, that I underrate
Thy friendly counsel, or thy kind intent ;
Although, to caution prone, I hesitate
To take a step, of which I might repent.
But rest assured of this, that should success
Attend thine efforts, none will more rejoice ;
Should fortune fail thine enterprize to bless,
Be Damon's home the dwelling of thy choice.

DEWLAP AND DAISY.

A FABLE.

DEWLAP LOQUITUR.

I OFTEN, Daisy, laugh within my sleeve,
To think how men can foolishly believe
The world their own, and subject to their sway,
When all the while they tend us day by day,
Rise with the dawn, and labour long and late,
For nothing else, than on our wants to wait.

DAISY.

And I, dear Dewlap, often think it strange,
As o'er this flowery mead I musing range,
To see the bipeds busily intent,
Each gap to mend, each trespass to prevent,
As if, poor souls, they thought the land their own,
And claimed the herbage nature's hand has sown ;

And sown, no doubt, for our behoof ; whereas
They never taste a single blade of grass.

DEWLAP.

And then to see them toiling all the day,
In summer's heat, to make the fragrant hay,
Our winter's food ; while in some sylvan shade,
We cool recline, or through the waters wade :
'Tis doubtless kind : but truly they surpass
In ignorant stupidity the ass.

DAISY.

And did you ever know fair Polly fail,
At morn or eve to bring the shining pail ;
And gently, with a hand as soft as silk,
To ease our bursting udders of the milk ?
Chanting, in sweetest tone, her song the while,
The tedium of our durance to beguile ?

DEWLAP.

I never chanced to see the creatures drink
The milky stream ; else could I almost think,

So carefully they drain the latest drop,
So fearful seem the precious store to slop,
That not disinterested are all their pains,
But somehow ordered for their proper gains.

DAISY.

I well remember, when I was a calf,
Suspecting that they did not give me half
My mother's milk : but why they should abuse
Our confidence, or to what purpose use
A beverage, that never was designed
For two-legged animals, I cannot find.

DEWLAP.

One morning, strolling to the kitchen door,
Myself unseen, I watched Susanna pour
Into a brazen pan the milky flood ;
And while with gentle heat it seething stood,
Her arms immersed, she gathered as it rose,
A creamy substance, white as driven snows ;
This in a hempen cloth and wooden vat
She crushed, and with a stone compressed it flat ;

The refuse, not unlike to muddy brine,
She portioned out among the grunting swine.

DAISY.

Three nights ago, I heard a rumbling sound,
Like carriage wheels ; and softly stealing round
The dairy corner, saw Susanna turn
A sort of mill, they call, I think, a churn :
My outstretched neck by branching laurels hid,
I watched awhile ; when she removed the lid,
And with her hands large lumps of fat brought up,
That vied in colour with the butter-cup.
The rest, milk-white, she poured into the swill,
With which the pig-troughs they are used to fill.

DEWLAP.

'Twould be, indeed, a grievous thing to bilk
Our pretty sucklings of their mother's milk ;
Yet do I almost think that Polly prigs
A part of it to feed her nasty pigs :
And, it is possible, the two-legged elves
Make of it something to regale themselves.

Nor need we wonder, servants as they are,
That they should pilfer for themselves a share.

DAISY.

Nor would I grudge them, for their servile care,
Such trifles as our innocents can spare :
For they not only gather in our hay,
And various roots, our hunger to allay,
But build us too a comfortable byre,
To which, when winter reigns, we snug retire :
With faithful service all our wants attend,
And to the meanest offices descend.

DEWLAP.

Much they must do, that meets with no return,
For many of us give no milk to churn :
Yet do I notice, Joe takes better care
Of those fat lazy things, that barren are,
Than even of ourselves, who never fail,
At morn or eve to fill the foaming pail :
In summer still the daintiest grass is theirs,
In winter all the best that autumn bears.

DAISY.

That often puzzles me, I do confess :
And what becomes of them, I cannot guess :
But ever as they grow most sleek and fat,
A man, in azure coat and greasy hat,
Forthwith appears; and taking them apart,
Surveys and handles them with curious art ;
If once he drives them through the outer gate,
They come not here again, whate'er their fate.

DEWLAP.

Once was I near him, in yon lonely nook,
And thought he bore a most suspicious look :
But worse than that, the nauseous smell of blood
He had about him, augurs nothing good.
But, prithee, Daisy, put me out your tongue,
And lick my ear, which some vile gnat has stung :
Long time uncomfortably have I sat,
Rather than interrupt our pleasant chat :
In turn I'll lick your interesting face ;
We then will move to some more shady place.

THE CHURCH AND THE WINDMILL.

A FABLE.

CHURCH.

I oft, good neighbour, feel disposed to ask,
Why still those ponderous arms thou wieldest round ;
As if intent on some laborious task,
Yet touchest not the toil-rewarding ground.

It gives me, I assure thee, much concern,
To see thee toiling through the livelong day,
A groan attending each convulsive turn,
And all those painful efforts thrown away.

WINDMILL.

Not thrown away, nor useless is the toil,
That strains my arms, and bids the frequent groan :
And though I till not the reluctant soil,
Yet am I not for that a noisy drone.

Whene'er the wind is whispering thro' the trees,
By thee perchance esteemed of little use,
I spread my arms to catch the favouring breeze,
And to my aid its wasted power reduce.

CHURCH.

If to no better purpose, than to turn
Thy cumbrous arms the winds of heaven were sent,
Then, I confess, that we had yet to learn
Therein the great Creator's wise intent.

But on they pass, on useful errand bound,
All wildly laughing at thy toil and care ;
Wondering to see thine arms still whirling round,
Only to beat th' invulnerable air.

WINDMILL.

To no such idle purpose are they sped ;
But to attenuate the golden grain ;
That miserable mortals may have bread,
The staff on which their being to sustain.

But to what purpose, pray, those puny hands,
That still keep stealing round that brazen face,
Which in thine upper story staring stands,
All scarred and spotted, void of use as grace ?

CHURCH.

Those hands move round to mark the lapse of time ;
And still are heard, within this lofty tower,
My tuneful accents, in recording chime,
To mind vain mortals of the fleeting hour.

And when returns the day of sacred rest,
Returns to all but thee, my voice I raise,
To call them to obey their Lord's behest,
And pay the sacrifice of prayer and praise.

WINDMILL.

Methinks, 'tis quite as needful to prepare
Wherewith poor hungry mortals may be fed,
As bid them gather to the house of prayer,
And indolently ask their daily bread.

Nor seems to me the busy noise that tells
Of useful labour going on within,
Less pleasing than the jangling of thy bells,
That whiles send forth their harsh unmeaning din.

CHURCH.

Thy useful labours do I not despise,
Nor aught that serves to mitigate man's toil;
Whose daily food his daily work supplies,
Condemned to cultivate the stubborn soil.

But spare thy taunts: nor scorn the lowly prayer
To that great Power, whose wisdom guides the wind;
And to whose providence and watchful care
'Tis wholly owing there is corn to grind.

DICKON AND ROBIN.

. A DRAYTON PASTORAL.

DICKON.

WHAT, Robin! tending still the lazy sheep!
Like them, nought else to do, but eat and sleep!
Whether to envy more, thy lot or their's,
I wist not, ye are both so free from cares:
While I from wasting toil no respite know,
Still doomed to plough and harrow, reap and mow.

ROBIN.

Each station, Dickon, has its proper care;
Nor is a shepherd's life without its share:
'Tis true that summer is a pleasant time,
When bees are humming in the fragrant thyme; [10

And pleasantly the noon-tide hours we pass,
Reclining idly on the mossy grass :
Yet summer has its cares: to rid the flock
Of thorns and brambles fixed in tangled lock ;
To raise the overcast ; with careful eye
To search the quarters stricken by the fly ;
To wash the sheep, to clip the snowy wool,
And brand the flock when Dian's orb is full.

DICKON.

But how can you such easy toils compare
With those the time-observing mowers share ; [20
Who ply the sweeping scythe throughout the day,
Scorched by the burning sun's unclouded ray ?
Or their's who labour in the fragrant hay ?
What cares to you does fruitful autumn bring ?
What mighty labours the returning spring ?
While to our sickle falls the golden grain,
Or while we load the harshly creaking wain ?
While wearily we plod behind the plough,
And wipe the sweat from off our streaming brow ?

ROBIN.

Though it be then our care to wean the lambs, [30
And to the fruitful ewes admit the rams,
I grant you autumn is a vacant time,
To tune our pipes beneath the branching lime ;
Not so returning spring, which still renews
The shepherd's tendance on the teeming ewes ;
And grants him not an hours unbroken rest,
When with the labours of the day opprest.
But, pray, what hardship does the ploughman know,
Like our exposure to the frost and snow ?
'Tis pleasant work to ply the sounding flail, [40
Well sheltered from the driving sleet and hail ;
To tend the cattle in the fragrant byre,
And sit at night around the blazing fire ;
While we are wading through the drifted snow,
Condemned to face the keenest winds that blow.
Such toils as these deserve a turn of play,
As erst our school-boy tasks a holiday.

DICKON.

You never yet pulled turnips in a frost,
Or, Robin, you'd be less inclined to boast

Of hardship suffered in the drifted snow, [50
Or from the coldest wind e'er known to blow.
But I'll allow, the winter and the spring,
Some care and trouble to you shepherds bring ;
Yet would I gladly change my lot with your's,
Which ease for half the year, at least, ensures.

ROBIN.

'Twere best to keep the stations we're assigned,
And to their proper hardships live resigned :
But sorry work should I make at the plough,
And not the less a sorry shepherd thou :
My voice all strange thy horses would not heed, [60
Nor my sheep follow whither thou would'st lead ;
Thoud'st deem, besides, their faces all the same,
Nor e'er, as I do, know them each by name.
Nor would poor Whitefoot, at a stranger's call,
Forsake his master, let what would befall.

DICKON.

That thou would'st but a sorry ploughman make,
Thy word, good Robin, readily I take :

But that a shepherd's craft is hard to learn,
No weighty argument can I discern.
Or where didst thou such wondrous knowledge gain,
That other men should seek for it in vain?

ROBIN.

Whatever of this simple craft I know,
To my good father, Dickon, do I owe:
Than whom a better shepherd never ranged
The Grampians, I for southern pastures changed:
Well skilled in all disorders of the sheep,
And on their ways a practised eye to keep,
Each healing plant that on the mountains grew,
Each weed injurious to the flock he knew.
The signs that usher in the rising sun, [30
He marked, and what attend his journey done:
By these the coming storm he could foretell,
And kept his sheep within the sheltered dell:
Or long before discerned the drenching rain,
And, prudent, drove them from the dangerous plain.
None better knew the moon and stars to read,
None to their warning gave more careful heed:

And none could better tell the hour of night,
When each uprose, and each withdrew its light.

DICKON.

With such instruction surely I might learn [90
A shepherd's business, and my living earn ;
Our master talks of parting with his team,
And doing all the work by aid of steam ;
Machines for thrashing, Robin, I have seen ;
And some, they say, are reaping by machine.
Who knows how soon the scythe and plough may fail,
Discarded like the sickle and the flail ?
But wooden engines never can be made,
To rob the shepherd of his easy trade.
Then teach me, Robin, thy good father's lore,
And whatsoever thou hast learned more,
And claim for thy reward this sliding scale,
Compactly framed withouten screw or nail,
With various figures marked on either side,
To shew you, as the pieces shift and slide,
The changing duties that were paid on corn,
Ere yet free trade had made the land forlorn.

Sir Robert gave it me when yet a boy,
No longer caring for his favourite toy.
His name in full see carved on either end,
By his own hand, and eke the "Farmer's Friend."

ROBIN.

Fear not, good Dickon, that the plough shall fail ;
And keep for future use thy sliding scale :
'Tis Heaven's decree, that they who would be fed,
By daily toil shall earn their daily bread ;
Nor doubt that whosoe'er his land will till,
Of necessary food shall have his fill.

SONNETS.

The license taken by our best poets in departing from the strict metre of the Italian Sonnet, may well excuse the variations occurring in some of the following examples ; which, however, but for such precedent, the writer would not have presumed to venture on.

I.

HUMAN LIFE.

HAIL, human Life ! Which only breath divine,
And no feigned process of Promethean art
Could to the senseless, inert clay impart.
Mysterious principle ! Who may define
Thy nature ? Or with confidence assign
The seat of thine existence, and the mode
Whereby thou tenantest thy frail abode,
Accomplishing its Maker's wise design ?
Thy subtle essence, seeming to combine
In closest union with this mortal frame,
Unlike to other life, shares not its change ;
Nor fails when we our fleeting breath resign :
But once immortal, still remains the same,
And mounts aloft, thro' boundless space to range.

II.

THE STILL-BORN.

So deep and tranquil seems thy mortal rest,
That though, by stern decree of envious death,
Inhibited the taste of vital breath,
We may not deem thee otherwise than blest :
Albeit thy wretched mother never prest
With kiss-imprinting lip thy pallid face,
Nor marked with ecstasy its childish grace,
While softly pillowed on her anxious breast.
Yet would not fancy willingly divest
Of life's reality that placid smile,
Which on thy cherub features lingering dwells,
And, but for the clay-cold flesh's chilling test,
Our unreluctant judgment might beguile
To think thy little bosom gently swells.

III

THE BEREFT ONE.

AH ! little thought thy mother, now at rest,
In mercy taken from this changeful state,
Ere yet hard fate had made thee desolate,
When she with hopeful exultation prest
Her first-born infant to her yearning breast,
What trials unforeseen of bitter woe
Her smiling babe was doomed to undergo ;
More bitter seeming to one so caressed :
And when she nightly on thy cheek impressed,
Half fearing to disturb thy placid sleep,
Her gentle kiss, and with maternal love
O'erflowing, audibly her darling blessed ;
She little thought, how early thou would'st weep
Each blighted hope, and sorrow's vigil prove.

IV.

THE BEREFT ONE.

2.

AND as she watched thy days of childhood glide
Unruffled by, and marked thy ripening years
Unvexed by care, and unbedimmed by tears ;
And then beheld, with fond maternal pride,
Her blooming daughter, as becomes a bride,
In rich attire by glad companions drest,
And deemed thee in thy fortunes highly blest,
To one of equal rank and worth allied ;
She little thought, how soon the favouring tide
Of life would turn, and on its ebbing wave
Sweep off at once each pledge to thee most dear,
And all unpitying, leave thee to abide
A loneliness far worse than of the grave,
Or howling wilderness, desolate and drear.

V.

FAREWELL.

THOUGH kindred voices still repeat, Farewell !
And the associate syllables convey
Each kindly wish to those who pass away ;
Yet on my pained ear they ever fell
With mournful cadence, like the solemn knell
Of joys departed, never to return,
Of past endearments, after which we yearn
With fond, but hopeless longing, till the spell,
That word of parting laid upon the heart
Be once more broken by the voice of those
Who uttered it ; and feelings, long unknown.
Of deep and quiet happiness impart
Their wonted charm to life ; and we repose
In that familiar nest, from which we had flown.

VI.

DISCONTENT.

By what strange folly are mankind possest ?

Who, not contented with the good they have,
Some further, greater blessing ever crave,
And that attained, still deem themselves unblest.

Is it, that, finding here no certain rest,

And sentient of its higher destiny,

The soul longs after immortality,

With restless yearning not to be repress ;

But, thrall'd to sense, pursues a fruitless quest

Of objects all unworthy of its powers,

Nor formed to satisfy its large desires ?

Like the poor lark, afraid to quit her nest,

That o'er its cherished inmates fondly cowers,

Nor soars aloft to join the heavenly quires.

VII.

THE KEEPSAKE.

COULD token tell the warmth of friendship pure,
Or costly tribute match thy passing worth,
Then gladly would we search the mines of earth.
In quest of that thy favour might ensure :
But seeing Nature's stores are all too poor
To furnish forth an offering meet for thee ;
And perishable things may never be
Fit pledges of regard that shall endure :
Accept the homage, which the friendly Muse
Empowers her humblest votary to pay
To goodness such as thine, by beauty graced,
Nor, though unworthy of its theme, refuse
This unadorned, but not unmeaning lay,
By no reluctant finger coldly traced.

VIII.

WRITTEN IN A COPY OF SHAKSPEARE,

BEST meed of Genius ! that from age to age,
As if the choicest things by nature framed
Throughout all time a common kindred claimed,
Beauty and grace still hang upon its page.
If it be true that earthly scenes engage
The interest of those, whose soaring mind
Had sought in life to elevate their kind,
Though treading now no more its busy stage ;
Then will the shade of Avon's bard be nigh,
When thou his wondrous pages shalt peruse,
And looking on thy task approvingly,
Possess thee with the spirit of his Muse,
Well pleased that his immortal works should be
A gift not unacceptable to thee.

IX.

TO DAVID WILKIE.

How truly to the life dost thou pourtray,
Thou matchless limner, each domestic scene !
Whether by cleikum's ruddy fire at e'en
The Village Politicians close the day ;
Or the Blind Fiddler scrape his drowsy lay ;
Or Chelsea Pensioners with glee peruse
Of hard-fought Waterloo the stirring news ;
Or honest farmers meet, their Rent to Pay ;
Or frolickers at Blindman's Buff to play ;
Or anxious Legatees the will to read ;
Or his Cut Finger whittling urchin rue ;
Or hind his Rabbit on the wall display ;
To thee will genuine taste award the meed
Of cultivated art to nature true.

X.

THE CUT FINGER.

Al! wherefore, luckless urchin, didst thou play
With sharp-edged tools ; and carving mimic ships,
Didst cut thy finger, as thy wood, to chips ?
Heed not gude wife, the bairn's outlandish bray ;
But from his grasp tenacious take away,
As thou wouldst fondly guard his precious life,
Oh! take away that ugly-looking knife.
And, kindly grandam, while in mute dismay
His sister hangeth o'er thee, gently lay
The stanching lint upon the bleeding cut,
And making all secure in linen fold,
Fail not to warn the younker, and to say,
“ Thy finger, mind ! will turn to a pig's foot,
“ If haply thou expose it to the cold.”

XI.

THE RENT-DAY.

IMPORTANT day of mingled hope and fear !
When decently apparelled in their best,
As on the hallowed day of weekly rest,
The sturdy tenants at the Hall appear ;
And to their kindly landlord drawing near,
While the obsequious steward sitting by,
For all his acts assigns the reason why,
Address their wants to his indulgent ear.
Others, the while discuss the ample cheer
Served by the aged butler's busy care ,
Or ill-content their grievances compare ;
And on his fingers one his count makes clear ;
While sits beside, in meek complacency,
His comely wife, with bairns, and house-door key.

XII.

THE BLIND FIDDLER.

SEE the young urchins' intermitted play,
And each more grave employment laid aside,
While, seated by his faithful way-worn guide,
The poor blind fiddler scrapes his drowsy lay :
Nor further needs he plod his weary way ;
For in the cottage all is mirth and glee,
And e'en the infant, on its mother's knee,
Would seem to share the general holiday.
The father snaps his fingers to the child,
The mother's face with joy is brightened o'er ;
The grandsire all regards with aspect mild ;
Neglected playthings strew the littered floor ;
And, from behind, a younker void of grace,
With poker-fiddlestick on bellows plays.

XIII.

THE VILLAGE POLITICIANS.

LET no censorious tongue too harshly blame,
Though here, as in all human things, are still
Commingle found the germs of good and ill,
This varied scene of England's pride and shame :
Her pride, that all who bear her honoured name,
Secure from arts of mercenary spy,
And force of overbearing tyranny,
Freedom of speech, and pen, and press, may claim ;
Her shame, that to the alehouse should resort
Her toil-worn sons, their time and wealth to spend ;
With noxious draughts to drown each better thought ;
In angry brawls and quarrels to contend ;
While each deserted home too plainly shews
The squalid misery that from tippling flows.

XIV.

THE CHELSEA PENSIONERS.

ASYLUM worthy men grown old in arms !

Best token of a nation's gratitude !

Where toil and hardship shall no more intrude,
Nor its brave inmates hear of war's alarms :

Save when the fame of some fresh victory charms

Their ears insatiate, and the stirring news

Of well-fought field, as Waterloo, renews

Their ardour, and to martial glory warms.

Alas ! that so few years should intervene,

Blest years of peace, of that fair field the meed,
Between the present and this pictured scene,

And all who heard their veteran comrade read

Those thrilling columns, should have passed away,

And few, nor e'en their Chief, remain, who won that day.

XV.

THE RABBIT ON THE WALL.

NOT more adapted to retrench the pride,
Which led to our first parents' hapless fall,
Involving in its guilt their children all,
That doom of labour man must needs abide ;
Than to relieve its weight the joys supplied
By kindred ties ; which sweeten so the toil
Of those who cultivate the stubborn soil,
Not comfortless their lot, whate'er betide.
The clean-swept hearth-stone, and the blazing fire,
The cheerful faces, and the frugal meal,
That welcome to his home the toil-worn sire,
Beguile his weariness, and make him feel,
When he has ta'en his last-born on his knee,
'Tis not for man to be more blest than he.

XVI.

BLINDMAN'S BUFF.

How prompt and inexpensive are the joys
That minister relief to wearing toil,
And calm the jaded spirits' harsh recoil,
When nature seeks the needful counterpoize !
Not e'en to childhood are the costliest toys
The most attractive : girls will oft extol
The beauties of a shapeless wooden doll
Beyond its rival's waxen charms : and boys,
Delighted still with boisterous sport, and noise,
Will grudge to spend a Christmas holiday
In more refined and artificial play,
Which, like a rich confection sooner cloy.
Indulgent rule ! that what is good for all,
Should, like the air we breathe, attend our call.

XVII

READING THE WILL.

Few pleasing features does the scene present,
When, from the solemn obsequies returned
Of one whose worth we now too late have learned,
The thoughts of all upon the will intent,
Their eyes upon the man of business bent,
Mid pause of deepest silence we behold
The all-important document unfold ;
And mark, as he proceeds, the discontent,
The disappointment, and the jealousy,
But ill suppressed, each countenance betrays,
So lately wrapt in sorrow ; and reflect,
What wide estrangement waits the future days
Of those one roof has sheltered, one board fed,
Whom now their separate interest only sways.

XVIII.

THE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.

How prone to cold suspicion is our age,
The pictured scene before us aptly shews ;
Where, as the old man's tardy hands uncloset
The written missive and its folded page
The youth commending to his patronage,
With cautious, side-long glance he scans him o'er,
As if his ill conditions to explore,
And from the scrutiny default presage.
Such is the lesson we too often learn
From life's experience : the heart of youth
All too confiding, frequently betrayed,
Distrustful grows, doubting of faith and truth,
Repels affection, querulous and harsh,
And quite discards benevolence and ruth.

XIX.

TO AN ASS IN A POUND.

1.

YES, there you are ! I'll vouch it for a fact,
That you have been upon the Queen's highway,
In contravention of the law, astray,
Detected, doubtless, in the very act.
Perhaps, in your defence you'll say, you lacked
The nettles, and the thistles, which you knew
In wild luxuriance by the way side grew ;
But which you better far had left intact :
For though by keenest hunger you were racked ;
Let me remind you, 'tis a crime most flagrant,
For which you well deserve, you stupid ass,
Not only to be 'pounded, but well whacked,
Wandering in the lanes, like sturdy vagrant,
Who dares to walk the earth without a pass.

XX.

TO AN ASS IN A POUND.

2.

REMEMBER, too, that your outlandish bray,
Whereby some long-eared friend you would invite
By pound-breach to relieve your wretched plight,
O'erpowering still the horse's cheerful neigh,
And scaring each ignobler brute away,
Is aggravation grave of your offence ;
Betokening, as it does, a want of sense,
And due submission to the laws, which say,
That, all in silence, vagabonds shall pay
The penalty their crimes so well deserve,
Nor insolently murmur and repine,
That they no longer are allowed to stray,
Quitting the masters they are bound to serve,
And in green lanes feloniously to dine.

XXI.

THALESTRIS.

1.

BRAVE Amazon ! The spirit I admire,
Which disregarding slander's ribald mirth,
Could nobly dare solicit such a sire
For her, to whom thou hopedst to give birth.
Nor, Heathen as thou wast, may we reprove
Too harshly that, to which not loose desire,
But reason strong of policy did move,
Or high ambition taught thee to aspire.
And though the page of history fail to tell
The further story of thy royal race ;
Or what proud fate thy progeny befel ;
Yet may imagination fondly trace,
In thy amour, the source from which began
The line of noble Tamerlane, or Jenghis Khan.

XXII.

THALESTRIS.

2.

AND you, fair captains of the warrior queen,
Who in her train the Grecian camp essayed ;
Not for mere love of pageantry, I ween,
And royal tendance, was your visit paid.
'Twas your ambitious aim to rear a race,
The offspring fair of Macedonia's lords,
Whose valiant deeds the glory might efface,
Which to your own brave exploits fame accords.
For this it doubtless was you deigned prefer
Your not immodest, nor unwelcome suit ;
And to such origin would I refer,
(The stock discerning by its kindred fruit,)
Those warlike bands, which erst did over-run
Fair India's fertile plains, and China's empire won.

The antithesis of the two following pieces is sanctioned by high poetical authority: "Coleridge's Poems," page 42, we have 'Lines to a Young Lady,' and page 52, 'Lines to a Young Ass.' Note to Byron's English Bards.

TO THE MEMORY OF A YOUNG LADY.

LET not the tongue of cold indifference chide,
That grief here pours a never-ebbing tide :
Full well may sorrow's springs unceasing flow,
For one, who left no counterpart below :
In her had nature done whate'er she could,
And grace amended what was less than good :
Alas ! that beauty should itself betray,
And light the ruthless spoiler to his prey !
That loveliness should tempt th' unfitting doom,
To wither in the all unconscious tomb !
For Death delights to take what most we prize,
Rejecting what he sees that we despise :
Culls for his gloomy halls the fairest flowers,
And leaves, as if in scorn, the worthless to be ours.

TO THE MEMORY OF A YOUNG KITTEN.

LET not the callous-hearted farmer's boy
Withhold his sympathy from pussy's cry ;
Nor treat her cruelly with kick or bruise,
Because unceasingly she moans and mews.
She mourns, alas ! the prettiest kitten lost,
That ragged urchin e'er in horsepool tossed :
Whatever beauty kitten e'er possessed
Was her's, and more ; as all the race confessed :
But this was just the very reason why
Joe come at night with stealthy step and sly,
And bore away, in triumph, to the pond,
Her favourite kitten from its mother fond :
Chuckling with glee malignant at the thought,
That those he left behind were plain and good-for-nought.

TRANSLATIONS.

MOSCHUS ; IDYLL I.

TRUANT LOVE.

As Venus cried her Cupid strayed,
The runaway is mine, she said ;
If wandering in the streets he's been,
Or in the public ways was seen,
Whoe'er will show me where he is,
For his reward shall have a kiss
From Venus' lips : whoe'er 'll restore
The boy, a kiss, and something more.

Of striking look he is all o'er,
And him you'll know among a score,
Not fair his skin, but like to fire,
With piercing eyes, that flash with ire :

Though full of mischief in his thought,
His speech is still with sweetness fraught ;
For never do his words express
What lurks within his heart's recess.

Of honeyed cadence is his voice,
But should his anger chance to rise,
Then all implacable his mind,
And full of fraud and craft refined ; [20
He's never known to speak the truth,
Is quite insensible to ruth,
And makes a cruel jest of those,
On whom his cunning wiles impose.

Fair curling locks his temples grace,
While saucy boldness marks his face ;
His hands, though tiny, draw a string,
That shoots to Hades and its king.
His body's bare, though not his mind ;
And, like a bird, he has wings behind ; [30
On men and women changeful darts,
And ever settles next their hearts.

He bears a very little bow,
And on his bow an arrow too :
His arrow's slight, but yet it flies
Aloft, into the very skies ;
About his back there dangles ever
A very small and golden quiver,
And in it many a cruel dart,
Of which e'en I oft feel the smart.

[40]

No single thing he calls his own,
But painful is, and cruel shewn ;
But most of all a tiny torch,
With which the sun itself he'll scorch :
If you should catch him, bind him fast,
Nor pitying eye upon him cast :
If tears he shed, be not so won ;
And if he laugh, still drag him on.

Should he to kiss you be inclined,
Refuse : his kiss you'll baneful find :
The wretch a deadly poison sips,
Who dares to press his ruby lips.

[50]

But should he say, " These weapons take,
And keep them all for Cupid's sake :"
Forbear to touch, nor e'en desire
His treacherous gifts ; they glow with fire.

MOSCHUS ; IDYLL II.

EUROPA.

ONCE to Europa Venus sent
A pleasing dream of vague intent ;
Just when the night's third watch awaits
Morn issuing from her eastern gates :
When balmy sleep the eyelids sealing,
And every limb soft languor feeling,
The eyes by gentle force are bound,
And truthful dreams flock all around.

Europa then, Tyre's royal maid,
Within her chamber slumbering laid,

Two lands beheld, in female guise,
Contend for her the victor's prize :
Of these she thought was Asia one,
The other that it looks upon ;
For this of foreign aspect seemed,
While that of native look she deemed ;
And round the maid her arms she threw,
And said she bore, and nursed her too ;
While, nothing loth, nor saying nay,
The other bore the maid away, [20
And said Europa was decreed
By mighty Jove to be her meed.

Straight from her couch with throbbing heart,
In terror did the maiden start ;
For like no fleeting, fading dream,
Did the foreboding vision seem :
And long she sat in mute amaze ;
For rested still her waking gaze
On those two female forms, which yet
Her steadfast look unshrinking met. [30

At length with faltering tongue the maid,
“What God has sent this vision?” said ;
“Which dream-like o’er my senses crept,
As on my bed I sweetly slept,
And, in my chamber safe from harm,
Has filled my mind with vague alarm ?
And who that foreign dame I saw,
And felt at once such fondness for ?
What kind regards, what glances mild
She bent on me, as on her child! [40
Oh ! may this dream the gods have sent,
Portend for me no ill event !”

Thus saying, she arose in fear,
And called for her companions dear ;
Equals in age and every grace,
That best beseeemed their noble race ;
With whom each harmless sport she proved,
Whether in mazy dance she moved,
Or in the river’s limpid wave
Her beauteous limbs prepared to lave, [50

Or else her virgin train would lead
To cull sweet lilies in the mead.

The summons they at once obeyed,
And in her hands held each fair maid
A floral vase, and now they sought
The shore, where oft they made resort,
Pleased with the rosy hues around,
And with the waves' melodious sound.
A golden vase Europa bore,
Of wondrous art, and richest ore ; [60
Great Vulcan's work, which Neptune gave
To Lybia, when his amorous wave
Had once encroached, by froward hap,
Into her violated lap ;
She gave the splendid gift to thee,
O beauteous Telephacse !
And to thy royal daughter thou,
Ere bound by hymeneal vow.

Elaborate works of highest art
Richly adorned its every part : [70

In rare device of golden sheen
Inachian Io there was seen
The heifer's form and gait to ape,
Nor bearing now her woman's shape,
As dashing through the briny wave,
It's treacherous paths she seemed to brave.
Cœrulean was the water's hue,
And on the mainland mortals two,
Together stood on lofty steep,
And watched the heifer thro' the deep. [80
And there on Nile's seven-channelled strand
Stood mighty Jove with fondling hand,
And bade th' Inachian heifer bear
The woman's form she used to wear.
In silver was the river traced,
And shining brass the heifer graced ;
While Jove himself in radiant gold
The artist's skill consummate told.
Beneath the vase's ample rim
Was Hermes carved ; and near to him [90
Prostrate on earth did Argus lie,
Now dimmed each ever-wakeful eye :

And from his purple blood arose
The gorgeous bird that proudly shews
His varied plumes, and spreads his tail ;
Which like some ship's expanded sail,
Covered the golden vessel o'er,
The vase that fair Europa bore.

And now the fragrant mead they reach,
And with her favourite flower does each [100
Her various taste delight, and cull
The purple hyacinth, or pull
The sweet narcissus, then at prime,
The violet, or the self-sown thyme ;
And on the lap of earth are strewn
All meadow flowers at spring-tide blown :
Others as emulously crop
The yellow saffron's fragrant top ;
While, in the midst, the royal maid
Throws all her peers into the shade, [120
And, as she plucks the blushing rose,
Like Venus 'mid the Graces shews.

Yet was the maid not destined long
To take delight the flowers among ;
Not fated long to call her own
Inviolatè the virgin zone.
For, seeing her, Saturnian Jove,
Who yields to none but mighty Love,
Confessed at once the sudden smart
Of Cupid's shaft within his heart. [130
To shun dread Juno's jealous rage,
And cheat the maiden's tender age,
He veiled the God, and straight became
A bull, in altered shape and name.
Not such as in the stalls are fed,
Or to the crooked plough are led ;
Not such as graze upon the plain,
Or, broken, draw the loaded wain ;
More glossy far his golden skin,
More bright the silvery star, which in [140
His forehead shone ; while fond desire
Beamed from his eyes with softest fire :
His horns rose up in crescent true
As the young moon reveals to view.

The mead he reached, nor yet alarmed
The virgin train ; for all were charmed
At sight of him, and gathered near,
To pat and stroke the lovely steer,
Whose fragrance from afar o'erpowers
The scent of all the meadow flowers. [150

At fair Europa's feet he stood,
And licked her neck, in fondling mood ;
While she her arms around him threw,
And wiped away the frothy dew
From off his mouth, with gentle hand,
And kissed him ; when in tones so bland
He lowed, that you had almost said
You heard the pipe of Phrygia played.
Then, kneeling at her feet, he bent
Upon the maid his gaze intent ; [160
And turned his head, as he would say,
“ My ample breadth of back survey.”
Then she her fair-haired train address ;
“ Here, friends and playmates, let us rest :

This bull's broad back affords a seat,
Which, like a ship, for all is meet.
In aspect mild and beautiful,
He's quite unlike each other bull :
His mind is human in it's reach,
Wanting of nothing else than speech." [170

Thus saying, she, with girlish smile,
Sat down upon his back the while ;
The rest were following ; when he rose,
And bearing off the maid he chose
At rapid pace, soon reached the sands ;
While she, with supplicating hands,
Turned towards them, called her virgin train
To lend their aid, but all in vain ;
For, like a dolphin, from the beach
He forward ran, far out of reach ; [180
The Nereids from the sea uprose,
And, borne by whales, a train compose ;
While, leader of the watery way,
Whose deep-toned voice the waves obey,

Rode Neptune's self upon the sea,
Owning his brother's sovereignty :
And Tritons, dwellers in the deep,
Their crowded station round him keep,
Sounding on their shell-trumpets long
The prelude of the nuptial song : [190
While on his back the maiden borne,
With one hand grasps the bull's long horn,
And with the other firmly holds
Her purple garment's trailing folds,
That e'en its very fringe might be
Unmoistened by the foamy sea :
Her robe, the while, filled by the gale,
Bore up the maid, like swelling sail.

But when she could no more descry
Or wave-washed shore, or mountain high, [200
Her native land left far behind ;
Beneath, the ocean unconfined ;
Above, the sky ; she looked around,
And thus her plaining utterance found.

“ Ah ! whither wouldst thou, bull divine ?
Or how, with feet unapt like thine,
Dost hold thy watery way, nor fear ?
Swift ships upon the sea may steer ;
But bulls avoid the briny waste,
Nor suits its food or drink their taste : [210
If thou’rt a god, then why belie,
By acts like these, thy deity ?
Nor dolphins walk the earth, nor yet
Do bulls the sea ; but thou, unwet,
Rushest alike o’er sea and shore,
Each hoof to thee a living oar.
Wilt thou, perchance, borne up on high,
Affect, like birds, the azure sky ?
Ah me, most wretched ! thus to leave
My father’s roof, and rashly cleave [220
To this fond bull, and all alone
My voyage take to lands unknown.
Thou ruler of the foamy sea,
Propitious shew thyself to me :
I trust that he will be my guide,
Who leads our course across the tide :

For, traversing this watery way,
Some power divine I sure obey."

Thus said she, when, to calm her fears,
The wide-horned bull she answering hears : [230
"Maiden, take heart, nor heed the swell ;
For I am Jove, and so may well
Appear to hold a bull's estate,
Since what I will I personate.
In form a bull, I all this sea
Have traversed for the love of thee :
But Crete, which nourished me of yore,
Shall now receive thee on its shore ;
And there shalt thou become my bride,
And bear to me famed sons beside ; [240
Who all shall royal sceptres sway,
And teach the nations to obey."

He spake, and all he spake proved true ;
For Crete anon appeared in view ;
And Jove another form assumed,
And loosed her zone, as Love foredoomed :

The Hours prepared the nuptial bed,
The Tyrian maid to Jove was wed,
To Saturn's son meet offspring bare,
And proved a mother's joy and care. [250

FROM BION ; IDYLL VI.

CLEODAMAS AND MYRSON.

CLEODAMAS.

WHAT season, Myrson, is to thee most dear?
Which dost thou long for thro' the circling year?
The summer, when our toilsome work is o'er?
Or the sweet autumn, with its plenteous store?
Or lazy winter, when the many please
Themselves in idleness, and fire-side ease?
Or has fair spring for you the greater charms?
Which like you best? To chat, at rest, none harms.

MYRSON.

To judge the works of God becomes not man :
For all are good and grateful : yet I can,
To please thee say, which is to me most sweet :
I love not summer, for its scorching heat ;
I love not autumn, when disease is bred ;
And winter, with its ice and snow, I dread.
Thrice welcome spring ! Would it might last all year !
When neither frost, nor burning heat we fear.
Spring teems with good ; all sweets at spring-tide bloom ;
And equal then the day, and nightly gloom.

FROM POSIDIPPUS.

LIFE.

WHAT state of life may true enjoyment give ?
How may mankind without vexation live ?
Would we at home in calm retirement stay ?
Home has its cares unnumbered, day by day :

Would we essay the service of the state ?
Embittered is our peace by party hate :
May rural life, or foreign travel please ?
The first brings toil ; the latter loss of ease :
Does store of wealth all anxious fears preclude ?
The dread of losing it will still intrude :
Is unmolested poverty our lot ?
The thought of want is rarely then forgot :
A thousand cares we bring home, if we marry ;
While we live single, we feel solitary :
Are children born, parental cares annoy ;
Without them is no full domestic joy :
Devoid of thought in youth, we wisdom gain,
When age and helplessness have made it vain :
And need we covet life ? Far happier they,
Who meet the stroke of fate upon their natal day.

FROM METRODORUS

L I F E .

What state of life may not enjoyment give ?
What class of mortals may not happy live ?
To those unused or disinclined to roam
What more attractive than their native home ?
To those well practised in affairs of state
What more delightful than the keen debate ?
On rural life attends unbroken ease,
And constant novelty on traversed seas :
Wealth claims distinction and the public gaze,
While poverty to none its ills betrays :
Is wedded life our lot ? Dear pledges come,
And make, what's ever sweet, still sweeter, home :
Yet should we childless be, we're free from care ;
And still more free, if we unwedded are :
All joyous is our youth, and calm our age,
And happiness abounds in every stage.
Who would not then love life, which as we use it,
Enjoyment yields to all, but those who dare abuse it.

FROM PHILEMON.

FAR worse it is than being ill, to say
To all who ask you, how you are to-day.

THE OLD MAN'S REPLY.

Good father, good father, pray how do you do?
Why ask you, my son, what already you know?
For surely it cannot be needful to tell,
That the old and infirm can never be well.

G R I E F .

DID grief, by being indulged, relax its hold,
Tears would be purchased at their weight in gold :
But now that troubles still their course maintain,
And by lamenting them we nothing gain,
Why should we weep ? Yet trees bear fruit of course :
And tears will ever flow from sorrow's source.

FROM ANTIPHANES.

WHEN, or of life, or wine, but little's left,
That little of all sweetness is bereft.

Two things there are that you may not conceal,
The wine you've swallowed, and the love you feel ;
Attempt for these whate'er disguise you may,
Your looks and words the secret will betray.

FROM STATILIUS FLACCUS.

TO CUPID SLEEPING.

THOU sleepest ; cause to man of watchful care ;
Securely sleepest ; Son of Venus fair :
Nor raised thy fiery torch, nor bent thy bow,
Th' inevitable shaft of love to throw.
Take heart who may ; still, cruel one, I dread,
Lest thou *dream* harm to me upon thy bed.

THE CHATTERER AND THE FOUNTAIN.

“ IN silence draw.” “ For why ? ” “ Or not at all.”
“ For thee ? ” “ Sweet draughts to quiet mortals fall.”
“ Nice fountain this.” “ Taste ; ere you nice call me.”
“ Ah, bitter fountain ! ” “ Ah, loquacity.”

FROM MIMNERMUS.

THE illustrious, while thy live, we all decry ;
Bestowing worthless praises when they die.

How self-extolling doctors love to call
Slight ailments serious, grave ones hopeless all !

BLOOMS, for a little while, the blushing rose ;
Then fades ; and nothing but a briar grows.

FROM AGATHIAS.

THE merchant boasts of cargoes out at sea,
Of which the winds are owner, more than he.

Why fear we death, the harbinger of rest,
Who heals the sick, and those by want oppressed ?
He visits us but once, nor e'er again
Was seen approaching by the sons of men :
While many varied maladies attend
On human life, nor known to what they tend.

FROM MENECRATES.

To live to see old age we all desire ;
But of his company how soon we tire !

Whenever age arrives, he comes too soon ;
Nor finds a welcome, even at night's noon.

The man who's old, and prays for lengthened years,
Should live for ever in this vale of tears.

ALTERED FROM CLEARCHUS.

If it might be, that heads should ache
The day before the drunken revel ;
Full many a toper would forsake
The sin that sends him to the devil :

But now the pain succeeds the pleasure,
He disregards the coming sorrow ;
Enjoys to-day his drunken leisure,
Nor recks of what may chance to-morrow.

FROM SIMONIDES.

How mutable is man's estate,
Well did the Chian indicate,
When he compared our fleeting race
To leaves, which give the woods their grace.
Yet few lay up the solemn truth
Within their hearts ; for joyous youth
Still prone to hope, and void of thought,
Forms lengthened plans which come to nought :

Nor age nor death excites a care ;
Nor sickness, whilst we healthy are.
Fools ! Not to know how brief the span
Of youth and life to mortal man.
But, better taught life's transient stay,
Do thou improve each passing day.

PHILIPPIDES.

'Tis not for man to be in all things blest ;
And why should you be happier than the rest ?

FROM EURIPIDES.

Ne'er lived the man, but toil and trouble bore,
And, when he lost his children, wished for more,
And stooped to death himself : yet mortals grieve,
When yielding earth to earth, the grave they leave.
Still must life's harvest, like the ripened ear,
Be reaped and gathered in from year to year :

Still is it our inevitable lot,
That one be spared to live, another not :
What nature bids us suffer, cease to mourn,
Nor deem that grievous, which must needs be borne.

NOTE TO "THE PARSON TO THE JUSTICE," Page 142.

It ought perhaps to be stated, for the information of the unlearned reader, that an Impropriator is a lay owner of tithes and glebe formerly belonging to the Church, and held by him on the implied condition of his sufficiently providing for the maintenance of the Parson, his Vicar, or representative in the parish. Let the notoriously inadequate endowments of our Vicarages, and the existence of our Pastoral Aid and Additional Curates Societies testify to the manner in which this condition is fulfilled! In the great majority of cases £50, £60, or £70 a year is all that the Impropriator has relinquished for the support of an educated man; who, as Vicar, is expected to maintain a respectable appearance, and to minister alike to the spiritual and temporal necessities of his flock. And, as if this were not enough, the Parson, it seems, must *invertendo*, pay tithes to his lay Rector. Truly the felicitous satire involved in the appellation Impropriator would incline one to think that it had been given in derision or reproach, and from its aptness stuck, as the name Bastile sticks, and will stick, to the new Poor-houses.

E R R A T A .

- Page 17, last line, read "upbraid."
62, line 11, read "thee."
77, line 13, read "nor."
79, line 18, read "of."
82, line 17, read "there."
95, line 11, read "sufferers."
154, last line, read "blaats."
180, line 14, read "nights."

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